

SACRAMENTAL RHETORIC:
THE RELATION OF PREACHING TO PERSUASION
IN AMERICAN LUTHERAN HOMILETICS

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This dissertation, written by

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DEDICATION

To My Father

THE REV. H. O. EGERTSON

An American Lutheran Preacher

*in whom these words became deeds
that were done among us
for more than forty years*

AND WE BEHELD THE GLORY!

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The process completed by the acceptance of this dissertation involved the sacrifice, encouragement, cooperation and support of a diverse community of persons whose individual contributions could never be acknowledged in this brief space. Each knows what was given and I know what was received. The only acknowledgment to be made here is "the debt of love I owe" to each and cannot pay to any.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relationship between the theory of persuasive-speech and Christian preaching as taught in the literature of American Lutheran homiletics since 1925. It aims to answer the question: Does the Lutheran tradition provide a way to relate preaching and persuasion without denying either the power of the Holy Spirit or the need for human persuasiveness?

Part One examines persuasion theory in two chapters. In the first, a general classification of communication is set forth in terms of types, modes and purposes which leads to a definition of rhetoric as public address with a persuasive purpose. Persuasion is distinguished from opposing extremes of apathy and coercion, being defined as the conscious attempt of a speaker to modify thought and action by associating the listeners' motives with pre-determined goals.

The second chapter organizes and discusses a four-step sequential pattern for persuasive-speech. Attention is reviewed in terms of importance, nature and types. Motivation is examined in the light of cognitive consistency and basic human needs. The strategy by which speech may awaken these motives is discussed. Association describes the process of connecting the response sought by the speaker to the aroused needs, value symbols, native signs and source prestige dynamics operative within the listeners. Direction, based on rational and emotional appeals, visualizes the consequences of various responses to the speech and provides specific guidance for hearers to follow in actualizing their assumed acceptance of the speaker's proposal.

Part Two examines preaching theory in three chapters, comparing it with communication and persuasion. The first chapter outlines the polarity of views about preaching in which the right pole depends primarily on Divine action, while the left pole depends primarily on human effectiveness. Two attempts to hold both poles together at the center point are reviewed. The purpose of preaching in the Lutheran literature is then viewed in relation to hearers, teaching and the worship setting. The persuasive purpose of preaching is affirmed.

The following chapter explores the nature of preaching in terms of the Divine and human roles, both of which are found to be equally supported in this literature. The question of the study is answered by locating the theological ground for affirming both the Divine and human roles. The use of an incarnational principle is rejected in favor of the sacramental principle found in Lutheran theology. Affirming the togetherness of God and the creation, the Divine action in preaching occurs "in, with and under" the human activity. God speaks, instructs and persuades man only through corresponding creaturely means and processes native to human communication.

The last chapter compares the content and form of preaching with the rhetorical pattern. Three essential elements of preaching are identified: law, gospel and call. Their sequential nature is affirmed theologically and rhetorically. A direct correlation is demonstrated between these elements and the motivation, association and direction sequence of persuasion. This relation is pictured in a correlational model of preaching. The study concludes with a catalogue of nineteen findings.

INTRODUCTION

About ten years ago, Paul L. Holmer had occasion to read a selection of books about the responsibilities of the ministry. His primary conclusion was that ministers are greatly confused about their tasks in general and their preaching in particular. He writes:

One does not read long before discovering widely divergent views of what preaching is and what it should be. So, it is not only many tasks which press upon a contemporary preacher to dissipate his orientation, but there are also a host of views about what sermons ought to be and how they ought to be done.¹

It is the intent of this dissertation to venture into this confusion at one particular point, in the hope of uncovering some elements of order. The first step will be to identify the particular question on which the investigation will focus, state the limits of its scope and describe the method it will follow.

THE QUESTION

At the center of those "*widely divergent views*" on the nature and practice of Christian preaching, there stands a polarity within which the confusion moves. This polarity can be described in a variety of ways, depending on the nature of the question addressed to it. Most commonly stated, it is the polarity of human and Divine

¹Paul L. Holmer, "The Logic of Preaching," Dialog, IV (Summer 1965), 205.

roles; subjective and objective emphasis; contemporary and historical concern; liberal and conservative viewpoints.

The question this study places into that polarity arose from the writer's personal concern about his task as a preacher within a particular tradition of the Christian faith. He is a child of the Lutheran church. Within that church he was baptized, nourished, confirmed, trained, called and ordained. Ordination conferred "*the authority publicly to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments on behalf of those who call a man to do this.*"² He was sent out to preach "*in order that by such proclamation justifying faith may be aroused and nurtured.*"³ The power to achieve that purpose was promised by the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

This preacher is also a child of American culture in the middle third of the twentieth century. He was educated by the state, for the most part. About the time he was born, the knowledge explosion was beginning to clarify scientifically the dynamics of human communication and the processes by which the beliefs and actions of people are changed. He studied some of this information as a speech major in college and more of it later in graduate school. He learned that the response people make to a message is significantly and directly effected by the person and presentation of the speaker. If his message is crucial, the messenger ignores the principles of persuasion

²Martin J. Heinecken, "What Does Ordination Confer?" Lutheran Quarterly, XVIII (May 1966), 131.

³Ibid.

at the peril of his hearers. By the day of his ordination, the polarity in relation to the preacher's task was apparent and the question which is the focus of this study was born.

The preacher faces three possible alternatives as he begins to prepare a sermon. 1) He can proclaim the Word in utter dependence on the Holy Spirit to influence the hearer and therefore safely ignore what is known about the science of human persuasion. 2) He can depend on the principles of persuasion to achieve the purpose of the Word he proclaims and therefore consign the power of the Holy Spirit to a pre-scientific world-view no longer relevant in an enlightened age. 3) He can escape the polarity by following a middle way which fully affirms a dependence on the Spirit and yet calls forth the full use of all human resources.

Does the Lutheran tradition provide a way to relate preaching and persuasion without denying the power of the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and without ignoring human persuasiveness on the other? That is the question to be studied. Its scope will be confined by some necessary self-limitations.

THE SCOPE

To achieve the purpose of this study, two general fields of knowledge must be investigated. On one side stands the vast acreage of communication and persuasion research. As the focus of systematic study, these fields stretch back to Greek antiquity. During the past fifty years, the realm of communications *"has undergone a succession*

of revolutions . . . the end of which is yet beyond our vision or prevision."⁴ Research in the dynamics of persuasion has been one of those revolutions.

On the other side stands the practice of preaching, which began with Moses, "*The First of the Preachers*."⁵ The theory which supports this activity has been historically interdependent with every discipline of theology--biblical, historical, doctrinal and practical--and remains so today.

Given the dimensions of these fields and the inter-relationships between them, it is obviously necessary to place limits on the scope of this study and its sources. Since the primary subject is preaching, the limitations in the field of persuasion are easily determined. While the literature in this field is broad, much of it does not relate directly to preaching and will be omitted from consideration. That which is related to preaching finds its relation through the sphere of speech theory, particularly as it has recently been adapted by the impact of persuasion studies. Most historical aspects of rhetoric therefore will be outside the scope in deference to the contributions of more recent research. The aim is not to contribute to the knowledge of persuasive speech, but to examine the

⁴Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu, "The Unfinished Revolution." in Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu (eds.) The Human Dialogue (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 1.

⁵Ronald E. Osborn, "Folly of God" (unpublished typescript, School of Theology at Claremont), p. IV C 1.

relation of present knowledge in that field to the task of preaching. Therefore, primary sources for this purpose will be found in the literature of persuasive public speaking.

Limitations to be imposed in the field of preaching are more difficult to determine. One limitation has already been indicated in the statement of the question itself, namely, the Lutheran tradition. But two additional limits must be set within that tradition in order to focus the scope more specifically. First, source data will be drawn primarily from the field of homiletics. Second, these sources will be largely confined to the literature produced by Americans or which has influenced the American Lutheran homiletical discussion. References to biblical, theological and historical studies will be made only as required to fulfill the homiletical focus of the study.

There are three reasons for this particular scope. The first reason is that a rich body of Lutheran homiletical thought is scattered in books and periodicals which, so far as the writer knows, has never been integrated in relation to any aspect of preaching and certainly not in relation to persuasion. This literature is worthy and adequate for the present task.

The second reason is that the literature on persuasive speech, to which preaching is to be related in this study, has been specifically an American product. That fact has cultural implications for American, as over against European, homiletical theory and practice.

The third reason is that there has been a marked dependency on European thought in the American Lutheran experience which has limited the unique contribution an alternate cultural context can

make to the discussion. This dependency is understandable given the immigrant background of Lutherans in this country and realizing that European national identities survived even in synodical church names until just twenty-five years ago.⁶

The difference between American and European attitudes is frequently referred to in the literature. From Sweden in 1945, Brilioth evaluated American preaching, which he found "*an impenetrable forest to the outsider*,"⁷ showing discomfort with the American "*hurry for the practically edifying and the emotionally impelling*."⁸ While commending the attempt to speak the language of the age, he saw lurking in that practice the "*temptation to forget the eternal, that which is true for every generation*."⁹ In summary, he wrote:

*Other preachers can learn a great deal from the Americans both about vital encounter with mankind over matters which concern them, and about language which bears the mark of reality. Nevertheless, a critical evaluation is necessary because of the growing influence which the American style of preaching most likely will exert in the future.*¹⁰

One decade later, Kantonen, an American, demonstrated a keen awareness of this European suspicion of American practices and developed a persuasive strategy to deal with it. He wrote:

In presenting the stewardship and the evangelism of the American churches to the evangelical Christians of Europe, one must always be prepared however, to answer one recurrent question. Do

⁶The Norwegian Lutheran Church in America changed its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1949. In 1960 it merged with others to become The American Lutheran Church.

⁷Yngve Brilioth, A Brief History of Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), p. 171.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 173. ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 174. ¹⁰*Ibid.*

these programs grow out of the gospel itself or do they represent so-called American activism? . . .

Is it true that in all things we idolize bigness and 'efficiency' and are in a hurry to arrive at practical results? . . .

Does our program consist of perfecting certain methods and techniques for getting people to join the church and keeping them entertained, or does it mean genuine commitment to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? . . .

In presenting evangelism to our brethren overseas I have found it indispensable to use the theological approach, to show that true evangelism does not draw upon a bag of clever tricks but upon the very truth by which the church lives.¹¹

Another decade later, Harrisville saw the difference in American and European outlooks demonstrated by opposing weaknesses in their respective preaching styles. As an interpreter standing between the text and the hearer, the American preacher tends to favor the hearer and forfeit the text. The European, on the other hand, tends to favor the text and forfeit the hearer.¹² While each weakness is as serious as the other, it is certainly clear that theory rising from the context of one culture is not likely to produce practices effective in the other culture.

A call for American Lutherans to develop and share their own thinking has been repeatedly voiced. One Lutheran theological journal devoted a whole issue to "The American Experience."¹³ Haroutunian laments the American dependency on European theological thought in one of its articles:

¹¹T. A. Kantonen, The Theology of Evangelism (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1954), p. 3.

¹²Roy A. Harrisville, "Preaching: The Burden and the Joy," Lutheran World, XIII:2 (1966), 165-175.

¹³Dialog, IV (Summer 1965)

*American experience was too different from European experience to make it logically possible to make American theology a minor variation on the European. But this is what was made of it, to the great disadvantage of the church in America and perhaps also of the church universal.*¹⁴

Twenty-five years ago, Raun challenged American Lutheranism to cut the cords of dependency and *"to discard her European swaddling clothes,"* replacing them with *"her own mature garments that will reflect both true Christian democracy as well as the new ecumenicity of Lutherans . . ."*¹⁵

In its own limited way, the scope of this study can serve that end. It seeks an answer to its question within the literature of contemporary persuasive speech and American Lutheran homiletics. The time-frame of this literature is concurrent, dating from about 1925 to the present, with the accent falling on the latter half of that period.

THE METHOD

The study will follow a method of exposition, comparative analysis, evaluation and correlation in two Parts. Part One aims to clarify the meaning and identify the basic concepts of contemporary theory in persuasive speech. It will begin with a system of classification which provides the definitions and relationships of terms to be used in the paper. This is necessary because words like communication,

¹⁴Joseph Haroutunian, "Theology and American Experience," Dialog, IV (Summer 1965), 176.

¹⁵J. J. Raun, "Toward an American Lutheran Theology," Lutheran Quarterly, I (November 1949), 428.

persuasion and rhetoric are neither used nor understood uniformly in the literature. Then the principles of persuasive speech will be described in sufficient detail to provide a framework of reference against which the theory of preaching may later be compared and evaluated.

Part Two aims to analyze the theory of preaching in American Lutheran homiletics in relation to persuasion theory. It will begin broadly by identifying the polarity evident in current views of preaching within the ecumenical literature. It will then compare the Lutheran discussion in terms of purpose and nature with the aim of locating the Lutheran view within the broader field. The Lutheran tradition will be analyzed theologically for the grounding it can provide to support a middle way within the polarity previously outlined.

The content and form of preaching in Lutheran homiletics will then be compared theologically with the pattern of persuasion set forth in Part One. A correlational model will be developed to show the resulting relation between the theories of preaching and persuasion in this tradition.

In response to questions raised by the findings stated at the end of Part One, the conclusions of the study will be specified and discussed at the end of Part Two.

PART ONE

PERSUASION THEORY

Chapter 1

THE CLASSIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The first step to be taken in answering the question of this study is an exposition of persuasion theory. Part One is presented in two chapters. The first chapter sets forth a system of classification in which persuasion is located within the field of communication and related terms are defined. The second chapter describes the basic principles of persuasive speech.

The words communication, speech, rhetoric, and persuasion are inter-related terms. Since their definitions depend on their relationships, it is necessary to clarify the way they are related in this study.

COMMUNICATION

What is communication? As a field of scientific research and theory, it emerged in the United States during the 1930's. From the beginning, it has engaged the work of researchers in nearly every field of inquiry, including engineering, mathematics, linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science and religion. Recognized as "*founding fathers*" in the field are sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, political scientist Harold Lasswell, and psychologists Kurt

Lewin and Carl Hovland.¹

The inter-disciplinary nature of communication research has been a barrier to developing any consensus on a comprehensive definition of the term. More than ninety-five definitions can be found in the literature.² Newman claims this failure of consensus does not result from any lack of knowledge about communication, but is due to *"a lack of understanding of the nature, the scope, and the function of a definition."*³ He maintains that searching for *"the meaning of communication"* is impractical and that only *"a meaning for communication"* can be given to enable people from various backgrounds to understand each other.⁴

Following his lead, this study will use communication as an inclusive term to identify the interaction of stimulus and response in all the spheres where it occurs. Figure 1 diagrams a system of classification in which the terms speech, public address, rhetoric and persuasion find their relational place within the field of communication.

¹Wilbur Schramm, "Communication Research in the United States," in his The Science of Human Communication (New York: Basic, 1963), pp. 1-15.

²C. David Mortensen, Communication (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), p. 14.

³John B. Newman, "A Rational for a Definition of Communication," in Alfred G. Smith, Communication and Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 55-56.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 56.

The diagram is more descriptive than definitive in relation to communication as a whole. The degree of its detail increases as it moves closer to its purpose of relating the terms it seeks to clarify. It aims to be sufficiently comprehensive for that purpose. It views communication from the three directions of type, mode and purpose.

1. Types

Two types of communication are identified, non-human and human, with provision for interaction between types. The non-human type includes interactions in the operation of machines, such as computers,⁵ and in organisms, such as plants and animals.⁶ Human communication⁷ takes place in two contexts, the intra-personal, in which an individual interacts internally through thought and feeling,⁸ and the interpersonal, where the individual interacts with others. Interpersonal communication is shown taking place in four settings: inter-group,⁹ as when nation interacts with nation, intra-group,¹⁰ as when

⁵cf. J. C. R. Lickleder, "Communication and Computers," in George A. Miller (ed.) Communication, Language and Meaning (New York: Basic, 1973), pp. 196-207.

⁶Ibid., pp. 73-106, for discussions of communication with birds and primates, various authors.

⁷For a survey and review of this type in fairly non-technical language, see Colin Cherry, On Human Communication (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966)

⁸Mortensen, pp. 69-169. ⁹Smith, pp. 565-608.

¹⁰Miller, pp. 208-218.

more than three persons interact with each other; one-to-group, where an individual and a group interact together; and one-to-one,¹¹ where two individuals communicate. In terms of type, this paper is concerned with human interpersonal communication in a one-to-group setting.

2. Modes

Communication occurs in two modes, verbal¹² and non-verbal.¹³ The verbal mode is expressed in codes of script and speech. The non-verbal mode operates through codes that are both sensory and extra-sensory in nature. While these modes of communication may operate in isolation from each other, they often operate simultaneously, depending on the media in which they transmit messages.

The media included in this classification are limited to those normally identified as divisions of formal speech. While they are primarily verbal, non-verbal communication always functions dynamically in these media. Though each of these media may function in the various settings identified, some of them clearly are most common in some settings. Drama, for example, would seldom function in the one-to-one

¹¹Mortensen, pp. 258-285, for discussion of last two settings.

¹²Miller, for several essays by various authors on communication and language, and Cherry, especially chapters 3 and 4 on language and speech.

¹³Dean C. Barnlund, Interpersonal Communication (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), pp. 511-612.

setting. The medium of public address normally functions in the one-to-group setting. This paper is concerned with verbal communication through the code of speech in the medium of public address.

3. Purposes

Finally, communication is classified from the perspective of purpose. All communication is purposive in that it involves both stimulus and response. Most statements of purpose in the literature are general, emphasizing the influence of communication on the receiver. Weaver claims the effectiveness of any communicative act can only be judged by:

*. . . the success with which the meaning conveyed to the receiver leads to the desired conduct on his part. It may seem at first glance undesirably narrow to imply that the purpose of all communication is to influence the conduct of the receiver. But with any reasonably broad definition of conduct, it is clear that communication either affects conduct or is without any discernible and provable effect at all.*¹⁴

Can such an inclusive statement of singular purpose be applied to the medium of public address? Speech theorists are agreed that "the fundamental purpose of oral discourse is social coordination or control."¹⁵ But in the service of that larger purpose, a given speech has a more specific aim. The central reason for speech criticism is

¹⁴Warren Weaver, "The Mathematics of Communication," in Smith, p. 15.

¹⁵Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: Ronald Press, 1948), p. 5.

to measure the effectiveness of a speech in relation to its aim and therefore the principle standard of judgment is the degree to which that aim is achieved by a particular speech:

*A speech is effective, therefore, if it achieves an end or response consistent with the speaker's purpose--provided that the purpose is, in turn, consistent with the dictates of responsible judgment and solicitous regard for the positive good of an enlightened society.*¹⁶

Public address then has the same end as all communication, namely, securing responses from hearers which correspond with the speaker's intent.

While the above description of purpose is important, it does not offer much help in identifying specific intents of particular speeches. Is there a fundamental set of categories in which the intents of public speakers can be organized? Thonssen and Baird discuss seven "*distinctive features*" of the speech situation, one of which relates directly to purpose and identifies five specific intents:

*The speech situation is always specific in its point of direction. It aims to achieve something. The very nature of any communicative undertaking in which a speaker tries to elicit a response from hearers makes for purposiveness. Speaker and listeners come together, not to rejoice in each other's presence, but to realize an end, be it of entertainment, explanation, information, persuasion or conviction.*¹⁷

Speech theorists have given a variety of such lists. Most common today is the triad of purpose: to entertain, to inform, to persuade.¹⁸ Berlo objects to this formulation because it is based on

¹⁶Ibid., p. 461. ¹⁷Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁸Robert T. Oliver, The Psychology of Persuasive Speech (New York: McKay, 1957), p. 7.

on faculty psychology, popular in the 18th century, which made a sharp division between the soul and mind of man, assigning separate faculties to each. When imported by speech theory, that division assigned the emotions to the soul and the intellect to the mind, so that speakers were led to separate reasoning from feeling and emotion from thought. Because faculty psychology has since been proved inadequate, Berlo considers these distinctions of purpose to be misleading now. Communication drives at a single purpose. Through it the organism aims to alter its relationship with its environment, to decrease the degree to which it is controlled by outside forces and increase the degree to which it controls them. He summarizes:

*Our basic purpose in communication is to become an affecting agent, to affect others, our physical environment, and ourselves, to become a determining agent, to have a vote in how things are. IN SHORT, WE COMMUNICATE TO INFLUENCE--TO AFFECT WITH INTENT.*¹⁹

On the basis of the nature of language, he argues that "one cannot communicate at all without some attempt to persuade, in one way or another."²⁰

The point Berlo makes in this matter is important and will be discussed again later. But does this really mean that no breakdown can be made in the fundamental purpose of communication? If speakers must ask, "What effect do I intend to achieve?", are there no categories into which their answers will tend to fall? If an out-dated

¹⁹David K. Berlo, The Process of Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), pp. 11-12.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 9 .

psychology is removed from the theory of speech, cannot the traditional triad remain standing simply as a delineation of purpose? Thonssen and Baird think so.²¹ So does Raymond Smith.

In presenting "*a unified and comprehensive theoretical framework for the study of spoken communication*,"²² Smith finds these distinctions "*as useful today as when originally formulated*."²³ Because he uses the word information to describe all messages, regardless of purpose, he uses "*instructional*" and "*persuasive*" as the basic designations for the purpose of messages. He omits the third leg of the triad only because it is outside the scope of his discussion.²⁴

The distinction between instruction and persuasion is apparent when their differences of concern are noted. Smith explains:

*Instructional messages primarily concern themselves with the dissemination of factual information and relationships, hence relate closely to such processes as perception, learning, problem solving, and retention. In contrast, persuasive messages, by definition, operate to mold opinion and elicit belief and overt action and hence relate to concepts of motivation, attitude shift, emotional states, homeostasis, wants, needs, and personality characteristics. Both types of messages externalize in their own particular patterns of linguistic form.*²⁵

Because these two types of messages differ in concepts and language form, they constitute sufficiently different intents to justify classification as fundamental divisions of purpose in public address. The

²¹Thonssen and Baird, p. 378.

²²Raymond G. Smith, Speech-Communication (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 1.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 34. ²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*

focus of this paper, in terms of purpose in speech, is on persuasion.

The three directions from which communication has been classified converge as arrows in a single circle. The point of their intersection will be the meaning of the term rhetoric in this study.

RHETORIC

Based on the classification of communication above, the meaning of rhetoric in this paper will now be discussed. A definition for this term will be given and defended, and two models will be described.

1. Definition

Rhetoric is the study and practice of interpersonal communication in one-to-group settings where primarily²⁶ the mode is verbal, the code is speech, the medium is public address²⁷ and the purpose is persuasion. Since this definition excludes from the meaning of rhetoric all speeches which are primarily entertaining or instructional in purpose, a rationale for the intimate connection between persuasion and rhetoric is called for.

²⁶The word "primarily" is included to allow for the non-verbal visual code that is involved secondarily.

²⁷Obviously, debate is also a rhetorical medium by this definition, but this paper excludes it in light of its concern for public address as it relates to preaching.

There are three reasons for affirming this connection. The first reason is that persuasion was the original meaning of rhetoric. The father of rhetoric, as a systematic study, was Corax, who brought it to birth in Sicily in the fifth century B.C. The ability to argue successfully in legal and political settings was the need of that time and place. Corax addressed that need with the first developed method and published it in Art of Rhetoric. One of three "*distinctive features*" in Corax's system, according to Thonssen, was its definition.

*It defined rhetoric as an art of persuasion, thus making it a practical art designed to elicit responses from hearers--responses consistent with the speaker's purpose.*²⁸

The primary writers of antiquity all held to this definition of purpose. Plato was critical of rhetoric as practiced in his time and reconstructed it to some degree. But he defined it as "*the winning of men's minds.*"²⁹

Aristotle,³⁰ whose contribution in The Rhetoric cast the mold in which all theory found its essential shape until the 18th century, defined it in similar terms. "*Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion.*" He identified three kinds of rhetoric: political, forensic, and

²⁸Thonssen and Baird, p. 35.

²⁹Schramm, p. 42.

³⁰For a comparison of Plato and Aristotle, see Everett Lee Hunt, "Plato and Aristotle on Rhetoric and Rhetoricians," in A. M. Drummond (ed) Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), pp. 3-60.

ceremonial. Each kind was matched with its own particular purpose. But by any analysis it is clear that all three of these purposes are persuasive in nature.³¹

Persuasion was not to be achieved primarily by emotional appeal in Aristotle's view.³² He assigned priority to logical and rational appeal. Nor was persuasion to depend on slick styles of delivery. He writes:

*. . . we ought in fairness to fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts: nothing, therefore, should matter except the proof of those facts. Still, as has been already said, other things affect the result considerably, owing to the defects of our hearers.*³³

It was only because he took the audience into realistic consideration that features other than logical appeal were included in Aristotle's system. Logic and reason were the ideal means when persuasion was the goal. Thonssen says of Aristotle:

*He made the term 'persuasion' embrace not only the appeals to the emotions of the hearers, but the logical and ethical modes as well. By this token Aristotle made persuasion nearly synonymous with the goal or end of speaking.*³⁴

Cicero's rhetorical theory was the next major expression of classical development. While he matched three oratorical styles to three purposes: "to prove, to please, and to move,"³⁵ it is clear

³¹ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

³² Thonssen and Baird, p. 331.

³³ Aristotle, p. 165.

³⁴ Thonssen and Baird, pp. 372-373. ³⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

again that all three were persuasive purposes. Consequently, Thonssen can say that Cicero "*indicates that persuasion is the objective of the orator's art.*"³⁶ The specific connection of rhetoric to persuasion is justified on the basis of its original and classical formulation.

A second reason for limiting the meaning of rhetoric to persuasion in speech arises from the misdirected use of the term as it emerged in the 18th century. We have already noted Berlo's concern on this point. Now we must look at it more intently.

Aristotle's formulation of rhetoric was shaped by the primitive psychology of his time.³⁷ With the rise of faculty psychology centuries later, a dualism not distinct in the classical period invaded rhetorical theory. Indeed, it stimulated the first real expansion of Aristotlean principles.

In George Campbell's treatise, The Philosophy of Rhetoric, this dualism came to its first sharp focus two-hundred years ago. Thonssen says Campbell's "*greatest contribution to rhetorical theory*" is found in his identification of the ends or objectives of discourse. By doing so, "*the classical doctrine that the primary aim of rhetoric is persuasion*"³⁸ was enlarged. The sole aim of rhetoric was no longer persuasion.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 373.

³⁷ Nathan Maccoby, "The New 'Scientific' Rhetoric," in Schramm, p. 41.

³⁸ Thonssen and Baird, p. 131.

The modern common triad of speech purposes, entertainment, information and persuasion, as separate and distinct goals, finds its source in Campbell's four-fold formulation:

*All the ends of speaking are reducible to four: every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will. Any one discourse admits only one of these ends as a principle.*³⁹

Here the term rhetoric begins to see persuasion as only one of many purposes. So sharp were the distinctions between these purposes that limitations were set on the nature of the appeals which could be properly used to achieve each of them. Metaphors and comparisons could be used in speeches addressed to the understanding, but not figures "*more striking*" or "*bolder*." Emotional appeals were not permitted for this purpose at all, since they would "*disturb the operation of the intellectual faculty*" and would be regarded as "*foreign at least, if not insidious*" in a speech aimed at the understanding.⁴⁰

From this viewpoint there developed the theory that "*conviction*" is a goal to be reached by rational argument and "*persuasion*" is to be achieved by emotional means. As Berlo noted, this division is clearly based on faculty psychology and its assignment of differing appeals to different parts of the mind in terms of the purpose the speaker has in speaking.

³⁹George Campbell, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York:1851), pp. 23-24; quoted in Thonssen and Baird, p. 131.

⁴⁰Quotes are from Campbell in *ibid.*, p. 374.

What we must notice here is that the terms rhetoric and persuasion both go through a shift of meaning away from that which prevailed in classical theory. Persuasion no longer includes rational argument nor seeks a change in thinking. It is limited to emotional appeal, aiming at a change of behavior alone. Hugh Blair makes this point explicit in the quotation Thonssen includes in his comment:

Conviction affects the understanding only; persuasion, the will and the practice. Therefore, 'it is the business of the philosopher to convince me of truth; it is the business of the orator to persuade me to act agreeably to it, by engaging my affections on its side.' Blair believes that conviction and persuasion constitute a sort of rhetorical hierarchy, with the former serving as the base.⁴¹

Just as persuasion was narrowed to the sphere of emotional appeal directed at the will, so rhetoric was expanded to include not only the new category of conviction, rational appeal to the intellect, but also the whole triad: to entertain, to inform, to persuade.

As we have seen, this triad remains a useful expression of distinct purposes for public address. But we need specific sub-terms to identify each of these differing goals. Rhetoric should be restored to its original meaning of persuasion, including both logical and emotional means and goals of change in both thought and action. Therefore, we relate rhetoric to persuasion because the reasons by which it came to include more than persuasive purpose were theoretically faulty.

The third reason for relating persuasion specifically to rhetoric is that persuasion, as a process, is not limited to the field

⁴¹Thonssen and Baird, p. 375.

of speech. It has applications in a much wider scope of research, indeed in the whole field of communication as previously classified. We need a term that will identify it in relation to speech specifically.

Rhetoric has fallen into disuse in recent times. R. G. Smith calls speech "*the modern term for rhetoric.*"⁴² If the meaning of rhetoric became so diffused that it could be replaced with so general a term, the change was probably needed. In any case, its current disuse provides an opportunity to reclaim it in modern times, refilled with its ancient meaning and carrying that meaning into the new world of persuasive speech theory.

The title Maccoby gives his essay, in which the results of the pioneering persuasion studies at Yale are summarized, is "The New 'Scientific' Rhetoric." It is not new to relate rhetoric to the science of the times. What is new is our psychological information based on modern scientific methodology. By resurrecting rhetoric, we will have a term for contemporary persuasive speech that avoids the dualism of the past two centuries and sees persuasion as one purpose of speech which unites it remarkably well with the classical tradition. We can maintain the advantages of identifying other purposes of speech without the confusion of including them in the meaning of this term.

2. Models

Static and dynamic models of public address have been designed

⁴²R. G. Smith, p. 1.

by R. G. Smith for the purpose of research.⁴³ They will be helpful in the present discussion.

The Static Model shown in Figure 2 is based on the Shannon-Weaver model of communication which shows the five component parts of the transmission process.

SOURCE ENCODER CHANNEL DECODER RECEIVER

Smith has adapted it to the public address medium in three ways. First, the terms are translated into the language of speech:

SPEAKER LANGUAGE VOICE
 GESTURE UNDERSTANDING LISTENERS

Second, two additions have been made to the transmission chain. On one end, "The Speech Form" is attached as a significant element of the encoded language. At the other end, "Time, Place, Purpose" are attached as significant elements of the decoding process of understanding. These can be referred to in combination by the word occasion.

Third, a feedback system carrying the listeners' "reaction" back to the understanding of the speaker is added. This emphasizes the interactive character of communication in general and the public address medium in particular.

While the static model is helpful in "*clarifying and explaining relationships in the speech transmission chain*,"⁴⁴ it does not account for the dynamic process taking place through it. The influence created by speech is like a running stream of water that has

⁴³Ibid., pp. 18 and 23. ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 22.

inevitable effects on everything it contacts. The static model shows the water *"in frozen form with all action suspended for leisurely examination."*⁴⁵ An additional model is therefore needed to show the *"ongoing continuous force,"*⁴⁶ and its attendant effects.

The Dynamic Model shown in Figure 3 is Smith's picture of the stimulus-response interaction in process. The two square boxes represent the parties in communication. The letter (S) and the solid line going from it represents the *"dynamic speech stimulus"* which travels back to the speaker and toward the listener. A response (R) is activated in the intra-personal context of the listener and then becomes itself a stimulus (S') for response (R') in the inter-personal context. That external response of the listener becomes in turn a stimulus (S'') fed back to the speaker, who responds in his intra-personal context (R'') in a way externalized by a modification in *"the continuing flow of the communication."*

*These stimulus patterns, then, constitute the dynamic components of speech force and make up the effective speech stream. They serve as independent variables upon which the orator or practitioner operates intuitively and upon which the experimenter operates scientifically.*⁴⁷

While Smith recognizes limitations in these models both separately and together,⁴⁸ they are still helpful in picturing both the structure and process of the speech situation.

The line going out from the circle on our classification

⁴⁵ Ibid. ⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 23. ⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

diagram⁴⁹ may now be identified and serve as a summary. While rhetoric takes place in a one-to-group setting, its message is received by members of the group individually. The group-response is only the composite of individual responses to stimuli sent by the speaker and by others in the group. Rhetoric is directed to the intra-personal context of each listener, including both thought and feeling. It seeks change-responses in attitude and action consistent with the speaker's aim and the expression of those responses in all the contexts of communication. When that happens, persuasion has been achieved.

PERSUASION

We turn now to the meaning of the term persuasion as understood in this paper. It will be discussed under three headings: distinction, definition, and pattern.

1. Distinction

We have already identified persuasion as the purposive element in rhetoric. But the word means different things to different people. Broadly applied, it can refer to the achievement of any purpose by any means. When "The Godfather" appeals to an enemy with *"an offer he can't refuse,"* such an action can be considered persuasive in this

⁴⁹See Figure 1

broad sense. Since such forms of influence are not to be included in our meaning of persuasion, we will need to distinguish concepts more clearly.

A diagram of relative influence and freedom is presented in Figure 4. It is a continuum which runs from zero to ten, in which zero represents no influence being exerted at all and ten represents such strong influence that the receiver has no freedom to refuse. Terms of influence are arranged on the continuum to show their relation to each other as understood in this paper.

Persuasion, at the center, is distinguished from the two extremes of apathy and coercion.⁵⁰ Apathetic speeches are those which exert little or no influence in terms of the speaker's purpose. Coercive speeches are those which carry such force that the speaker's purpose is achieved with the hearer's knowledge but not his consent.

Interest stands between apathy and persuasion. It represents influence sufficient to achieve an understanding of what the speaker is saying, but not sufficient to achieve acceptance. Manipulation stands between coercion and persuasion. It represents influences which achieve the speaker's purpose with the consent but not the knowledge of the hearer.

Persuasion represents that type of influence which achieves the speaker's purpose with both the knowledge and consent of the

⁵⁰For several essays on varying views and applications of coercion, see J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (eds.) Coercion (New York: Aldine-Atherton, 1972)

the hearer. While it aims to influence the hearer to respond with voluntary acceptance, the hearer remains free to choose.

These distinctions are supported by current emphasis in the literature of rhetoric. For example, Scheidel writes:

We shall speak of persuasive speaking as a phenomenon which reflects choice on the part of the listener. The listener must both choose to give his attention and choose whether or not to accept or reject the message. Brainwashing and hypnotism are possible influential techniques, and so for that matter are the use of the rack, the iron maiden, and various other devices for torture. However, such means will be considered as existing outside the limits of our definition of persuasion . . . We want to eliminate from our consideration all physical and super-psychological coercion, whether actual or implied.⁵¹

And so do we. But we also want to emphasize the contrast from its opposite side. We want to exclude all forms of inertia, disinterest and irrelevance from our definition. If it seems obviously unnecessary to do that, since no one fears apathy will result from persuasion, then one purpose of the diagram will be achieved. It intends to show that influence in the range of seven to ten is no closer to four to six than is zero to three. In other words, persuasion is as distinct from coercion and manipulation as it is from apathy and mere interest.

One more point needs to be made in connection with the hearer's freedom to choose. There is as little freedom under conditions of apathy as under conditions of coercion. In the former case he is not free to accept. In the latter case he is not free to reject. In terms of influence and freedom, persuasion is a centrist concept.

⁵¹ Thomas M. Scheidel, Persuasive Speaking (Oakland: Scott, Foresman, 1967), p. 2.

2. Definition

Several definitions of persuasion have been given during the development of modern rhetoric. Some of these were limited to a statement of ends, such as, "*to induce or win.*" Others focused on ends and means: "*to influence by argument.*"⁵² As we have already noted, emotional appeal was long identified as the sole or major means of persuasion. On the basis of a more advanced psychology, the new rhetoric has brought ends and means together and stated them in a new way. We will look at four definitions in the literature, discuss them briefly, and propose a revised definition for this paper.

Each writer presents definitions based on his own theory of persuasion. Taken in chronological order, they begin with the work of James A. Winans, whose book Public Speaking was published in 1917 and marks the beginning of modern rhetorical development. He based his view of persuasion on the psychology of William James, who held attention to be the critical determinant of behavior. Following James' assertion that "*What holds attention determines action,*"⁵³ Winans defined persuasion as "*the process of inducing others to give fair, favorable, or undivided attention to propositions.*"⁵⁴

⁵²William Norwood Brigance, Speech Composition (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953), p. 135.

⁵³James Albert Winans, Public Speaking (New York: Century, 1917), p. 191.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 194.

On the basis of a psychology which found desire as the main-spring of human belief and action, an expanded view was set forth by William Brigrance in 1937. He maintained the importance of attention, but added an emphasis on human desire as motivation for change. He defined persuasion in terms of two aims the speaker may have:

a. *When the aim is to rouse from indifference, to inspire, or to stimulate lagging enthusiasms, and faiths, PERSUASION IS A PROCESS OF VITALIZING OLD DESIRES, PURPOSES, OR IDEALS.*

b. *When the aim is to secure the acceptance of new beliefs or courses of action, PERSUASION IS THE PROCESS OF SUBSTITUTING NEW DESIRES, PURPOSES, OR IDEALS FOR OLD ONES.*⁵⁵

A further development is seen in the work of Winston Brembeck and William Howell in 1952. While maintaining the previous emphasis on attention and desire, they added as a third element the connection of the hearer's desires with the proposition being advocated by the speaker. For them persuasion *"is defined as the conscious attempt to modify thought and action by manipulating the motives of men toward pre-determined ends."*⁵⁶

In 1957, Wayne Minnick expressed the caution that previous theories *"have allowed motives to dominate the process of persuasion to the extent that the role of other determinants is obscured or ignored."*⁵⁷ He then set forth *"a complete process"* which resulted in the following definition:

⁵⁵Brigrance, p. 139.

⁵⁶Winston Lamont Brembeck and William Smiley Howell, Persuasion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 24.

⁵⁷Wayne Minnick, The Art of Persuasion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 28.

*Persuasion, as conceived in this book, is discourse, written or oral, that is designed to win belief or stimulate action by employing all the factors that determine human behavior.*⁵⁸

An examination of Minnick's work indicates no new contribution to the persuasion process. His contribution is found in a renewed emphasis on the need for communication concerns, such as perception, and persuasive forces, such as credibility and audience values. These must not be lost in a total concentration on motives.

Which of these definitions shall we follow? Clearly, the statements of Winans and Brigrance are too limited for use in our day. Minnick's position is too inclusive, for it concentrates on a field wider than persuasion itself. Perception, for example, is as much a concern for communication in general as for persuasion in particular. We need a definition that focuses primarily upon persuasion, yet one which is also complete.

The definition of Brembeck and Howell comes closest to that goal, but it has two drawbacks. First, it includes the word "*manipulating*." While meaning it in a different way, we have already excluded it from our concept. Using it in a definition would be confusing. The second drawback is seen in the fact that this definition does not relate specifically to the rhetorical setting. Therefore, we will adopt its structure but revise its language to eliminate these drawbacks.

In this paper, persuasion is the conscious attempt of a

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

speaker to modify thought and action by associating the listeners' motives with pre-determined goals.

3. Pattern

The literature of rhetoric offers a variety of patterns in which elements of persuasion are listed and arranged. This variety will be shown by two patterns presented in sentence form and by a comparative chart listing additional patterns where the elements are identified by single words.

Since we adopted a revised form of the definition given by Brembeck and Howell, we will look at their pattern first. They write:

*An analysis of the basic process of persuasion reveals four general steps or stages which may occur in the following order: (A) Gain and maintain attention; (B) arouse desires useful to the persuader's purpose; (C) demonstrate how these desires can be satisfied by acceptance of the persuader's proposition; and (D) produce the specific response desired. These steps are often telescoped and interrelated.*⁵⁹

These four steps will be summarized on the chart by the words: attention, desire, demonstration and production.

As previously noted, Minnick was determined to preserve a place for factors other than motivation in persuasion. He sets forth the essential ingredients in a different way than the others. His pattern forms the outline of persuasion as a field of study rather than as an order for a speech itself. What he calls 'A Complete

⁵⁹Brembeck and Howell, p. 26.

Process of Persuasion" is presented by six questions identifying factors *"each of which helps to determine behavior but by itself is inadequate to produce action."*⁶⁰

1. Does the communication catch and hold the attention of audience?
2. Does the audience understand the communication as it was intended by the communicator?
3. Does the audience believe the communication?
4. Does the audience see a relationship between the communication and their needs and wants?
5. Does the behavior recommended in the communication fit the audience's scheme of personal values?
6. Can the audience act in the light of existing obstacles?⁶¹

In Minnick's view: *"Behavior is a dynamic interplay of all these factors."*⁶²

While Minnick is certainly correct in maintaining the crucial role of perception in 2., credibility in 3., audience values in 5., and obstacles in 6., these are in reality organizational matters which other writers include in their systems but not in the ordering of a speech itself. We will summarize Minnick's elements on the chart with the words: attention, perception, credibility, relationship, values, and possibility.

The following page presents a summary of these and five other patterns. The horizontal lines divide the chart into four sections, corresponding to the pattern to be adopted by this paper. That pattern is given in headings at the far right so the other patterns

⁶⁰ Minnick, p. 29. ⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 29-32.

⁶² Ibid., p. 29.

may be compared with it. At the top are listed the names of authors and the dates in which their patterns were published. They are arranged in chronological order from left to right in order to clarify both the development of differences and the consistency of likenesses in these positions.⁶³

The following observations emerge from a comparison of these patterns. First, going horizontally, we note the uniformity of four themes, however they may be expressed. All agree that attention is essential. Scheidel deals with it as part of focusing.⁶⁴ While important in all forms of communication, it is considered persuasive in itself and therefore belongs in the pattern.

A second unifying concept is motivation. Whether expressed as impression, desire, need, want, or motive, persuasion requires some means of arousing a hunger that seeks satisfaction or a pressure that seeks relief. For Scheidel, whose categories ride on the cracks of this chart, focusing, associating and resolving all function as motivators.

A third unifying category is found in association. Here Brigrance alone is silent in his pattern, but parts of this category

⁶³See Chart on page 37. References not previously noted are: Harry L. Hollingsworth, The Psychology of the Audience (New York: American Book, 1935), p. 12. Brigrance, pp. 135-139. Alan H. Monroe, Principles and Types of Speech (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1949), pp. 307-331. Scheidel, pp. 60-79. Raymond S. Ross, Persuasion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 187.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 65-89.

Hollingsworth 1935	Brigance 1937	Monroe 1949	Brembeck & Howell 1952	Minnick 1957	Scheidel 1967	Ross 1974	
1 ATTENTION 2 INTEREST	1 ATTENTION	1 ATTENTION	1 ATTENTION	1 ATTENTION 2 PERCEPTION	1 RECEIVING -- -- -- -- -- 2 FOCUSING	1 ATTENTION	ATTENTION
3 IMPRESSION	2 DESIRE	2 NEED	2 DESIRE	3 CREDIBILITY 4 NEEDS/WANTS TO ↑ RELATIONSHIP	3 ASSOCIATING	2 NEED	MOTIVATION
4 CONVICTION		3 SATISFAC- TION 4 VISUALI- ZATION	3 DEMONSTRATION	↓ TO VALUES	4 RESOLVING	3 PLAN 4 OBJECTIONS	ASSOCIATION
5 DIRECTION	3 RESPONSES	5 ACTION	4 PRODUCTION	6 POSSIBILITY		5 REINFORCE- MENT 6 ACTION	DIRECTION

are included in his response. The attitude or action the speaker seeks to actualize must be firmly attached to the motive which has been activated.

Finally, there is a unified emphasis on direction. While more variety is seen in this category than the others, the intent is the same: to facilitate the fulfillment of what former steps have achieved.

Some writers use more than one step to cover a given concept. Hollingsworth's separation of interest from attention is one example but that is a matter of organization. Minnick and Scheidel's inclusion of perception is a major variation from the usual pattern. Perception is what Scheidel means by receiving. But it seems unnecessary to make a place in the pattern for it, since it belongs primarily to the realm of communication as a whole, and finds its significance to persuasion in that fact alone.

The second observation comes from analyzing the chart vertically. The consistency seen in the four categories discussed above is matched by an equal consistency in the order of their arrangement. From 1935 to 1974 there has been no significant variation in the ordering of these elements. Indeed, the order is a part of the pattern.

In this chapter communication has been classified in terms of types, modes and purposes. Rhetoric was defined and defended as a persuasive concept. Persuasion was distinguished from the twin extremes of apathetic and coercive speech. After reviewing the literature, a definition was given and the basic elements of the persuasive

pattern were identified. These elements will be examined more fully in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

THE PATTERN OF PERSUASION

The pattern of persuasion identified at the close of the previous chapter is the characteristic feature of modern rhetoric. In the static speech model presented in Figure 2, the box labeled "The Speech Form" would refer to the application of this pattern in a rhetorical address. Speeches which aim to entertain or instruct would be formed in other patterns which do not concern us here. In this chapter we will examine the elements of this persuasive pattern in some detail, so that our study may compare it later with the concerns of preaching in American Lutheran homiletics.

ATTENTION

The first comprehensive treatment of classical rhetorical theory in the English language was published by Thomas Wilson in his ARTE OF RHETORIQUE in 1553. That was also the book which first emphasized the importance of attention in rhetoric.¹ As previously noted,² its modern prominence began with Winans' work, where it was used as the very definition of persuasion itself. While no longer viewed so

¹Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: Ronald Press, 1948), pp. 118-119.

²See p. 31 of this paper.

comprehensively, it remains primary in importance to this day. As Brembeck and Howell express it, *"Without attention communication does not exist, and without it persuasion is impossible, for attention is the first step in the persuasion process."*³

It is necessary at the outset to clarify one difference between attention and the other three elements of the pattern. When called *"the first step,"* attention might be viewed as something important only at the beginning and then left behind when the second step is taken. In reality, however, attention is a crucial matter throughout the whole process. Motivation, association and direction may be considered steps which are taken and then left behind. But attention must be attracted as a magnet attracts. The same force which draws an object to the magnet, holds it there. In like manner, the forces which gain attention in the beginning of a speech must be maintained while the following steps in the pattern are being taken. Figure 5 pictures this difference.

1. Importance

The importance of attention for rhetoric can be seen in three unfolding factors. First, the speaker and the speech are a minority of two amidst multiple stimuli which compete for the listener's

³Winston Lamont Brembeck and William Smiley Howell, Persuasion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 263.

attention. During a lifetime, each person receives "one thousand times more units of information than we have nerve cells by which they can be interpreted, associated and stored."⁴ Each listener is barraged by countless stimuli coming from both external and internal fields of reference. This faces the listener with endless choices. He expresses his choice through attention, which is:

*The process of selecting a particular stimulus of the many available in one perceptual field and focusing upon it until it becomes sharp and clear while other stimuli recede to indistinctness.*⁵

Minnick has given a helpful illustration which pictures only some of the possible stimuli operating in the listener's perceptual fields.⁶ Because of this heavy competition, Oliver contends that "The chief task of the persuasive speaker is to serve as the 'selector' of his audience's attention."⁷

A second factor, emerging from the first, is that the listener's responses are limited to the stimuli which he attends. If his attention during a speech for the cancer fund is attracted by the moth dancing with a light bulb behind the speaker's head, his response to the meeting may be the purchase of some yellow light bulbs on his way home. He is not likely even to see the cancer fund's coin collector,

⁴Robert T. Oliver, The Psychology of Persuasive Speech (New York: McKay, 1957), p. 116.

⁵Wayne Minnick, The Art of Persuasion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 38.

⁶See Figure 6 reproduced from *ibid.*, p. 39.

⁷Oliver, p. 117.

sitting three inches from the tray in which his change is returned, to say nothing about contributing to it. As Minnick says:

*While attention is not a cause of action, in itself, it helps to determine action by determining which potential stimuli in a perceptual field a person will respond to.*⁸

In Figure 7 Minnick illustrates a listener who is attending a stimulus other than the speaker. The point is that his responses are determined by that fact. He is free to respond to the speaker only if his attention is focused there.

The third factor showing the importance of attention rises out of the others. To a limited degree, attention itself accomplishes persuasion. William James taught that action flows inevitably from an idea which compels attention and dominates the consciousness.

Let it once so dominate, let no other idea succeed in displacing it, and whatever motor effects belong to it by nature will inevitably occur . . .

*The idea to be consented to must be kept from flickering and going out. It must be held steadily before the mind until it fills the mind.*⁹

Belief as well as action is a result of attention. James held that "our belief and our attention are the same fact. For the moment, what we attend to is reality."¹⁰ To whatever degree this is true,

⁸Minnick, p. 41.

⁹Quoted from William James, Psychology: Briefer Courses, in James Albert Winans, Public Speaking (New York: Century, 1917), p. 190.

¹⁰Quoted from William James, Psychology, by William E. Utterback, "A Psychological View of Argumentation," in A. M. Drummond (ed.) Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), p. 291.

both belief and behavior are the consequence of attention itself. It is on these grounds that Minnick can say:

*Theoretically, if an advocate could keep attention focused on a course of action to the exclusion of contrary stimulations, the proposed action would tend automatically to ensue.*¹¹

Hypnotism is an example of this. Here attention is focused exclusively on a single stimulus. The hypnotic voice and the suggestions given are accepted as reality and acted upon "automatically."¹² While hypnotism is an expression of manipulation which is excluded from our concept of persuasion, it serves to illustrate the importance of attention in the persuasive process.

The first goal of the speaker is to attract the listener's attention in the way illustrated by Minnick in Figure 8. In order to do that, he will need to know something about the nature of attention.

2. Nature

Attention occurs through stimuli received by the sensory organs. Brembeck and Howell follow O'Neill and Weaver in defining attention as:

. . . a unified, coordinated muscular set, or attitude, which brings sense organs to bear with maximum effectiveness upon a

¹¹Minnick, p. 38.

¹²Raymond S. Ross, Persuasion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 177.

*source of stimulation and thus contributes to alertness and readiness of response.*¹³

How long can attention be maintained and how many things can be attended at one time? In terms of time, attention is an exceedingly brief phenomenon. The studies of Pillsbury in 1908 estimated a single act of attention to last from three to twenty-four seconds. Billings' experiments in 1914 led him to estimate the average length to be two seconds.¹⁴ Later studies have indicated even shorter periods. Schmidt and Kristofferson's experiments led them to conclude that a period of attention falls within the range of 77 to 110 thousandths of a second.¹⁵ While further studies are needed to confirm these findings, it is clear that the duration of the attention period is exceedingly short.

In terms of span, the number of things a person can attend at the same time are few. Studies differ in this area too. It seems to depend on the number of stimuli anticipated and the nature of the channels being used. Broadbent reports the observation that control tower operators were sometimes able to identify two aircraft call signs arriving simultaneously, but were able to understand only one of the two messages that followed them. The call signs were both identifiable because the operators knew pretty well which aircraft were

¹³Brembeck and Howell, p. 264. ¹⁴Ibid., p. 265.

¹⁵Marianne W. Schmidt and Alred B. Kristofferson. "Discrimination of Successiveness: A Test of a Model of Attention," Science, CXXXIX (January 11, 1963), 112-113.

likely to call. But they did not know what the pilots would say.

From this and other studies, Broadbent concluded:

*When the listener is thoroughly familiar with a situation, so that he knows to within a small number of alternatives what each message will be, he can comprehend two simultaneous messages. But when one or both messages are drawn from a large number of possibilities, the filter in the brain lets only one message come through.*¹⁶

On the other hand, Schmidt and Kristofferson found attention to be "a periodic phenomenon" in which only one stimulus could be attended at a time. In their study two signals were sent to their subjects, one visual and one auditory. These signals came at varying intervals of time. The purpose was to determine the relationship of the length of time between the two stimuli and the accuracy of the subject's reporting whether the signals came together or in succession.

The experiment was based on the assumption that:

. . . the sensory systems consist of independent channels which can be attended only one at a time.

*. . . When attention is directed at one channel it may be signaled to switch to a second channel by an input arriving over the second channel. Attention can be switched only at the end of a period, although it may remain on a channel for multiples of M.*¹⁷

Their experiments resulted in support for these assumptions.

Several things about the nature of attention appear clear from this. Normally, a listener can focus his attention on only one thing

¹⁶Donald E. Broadbent. "Attention and the Perception of Speech," in Alfred G. Smith, Communication and Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), p. 279.

¹⁷Schmidt and Kristofferson, p. 112; M equals the period of attention.

at a time. This period of time is exceedingly brief, probably less than a second. At the end of each period he may switch to another stimulus or remain for an additional period on the same one. As Brembeck and Howell write:

*Under most conditions, our senses are confronted with a multitude of stimuli, and . . . attention tends to shift from one stimulus to another, exploring the value of each.*¹⁸

When something of value is found, attention remains there until input of greater value arrives on another channel.

The speaker, therefore, faces a situation in which he must constantly be sending stimuli that are of greater value to his hearers than others pressing in and around them. In order to do so, it will be helpful to differentiate the types of attention and the forces which produce them.

3. Types

Most writers draw a distinction between two types of attention. Brembeck and Howell, however, have identified three and we find this division fruitful. The nature of attention is not categorized in these types. Rather, they are differentiated on the basis of the kinds of stimuli which attract them.

Involuntary Attention - Some stimuli compel attention in the manner of a reflex response. Without thinking or choosing, the

¹⁸Brembeck and Howell, p. 266.

person's attention is arrested by a power inherent in the stimulus itself. Therefore, it is called involuntary.

The unifying characteristic of stimuli which arrest attention is contrast. The various lists given in the literature find their common ground in this central concept. We summarize by a revision of Minnick's list.¹⁹

Intensity - The brightest light, the loudest sound, the highest mountain peak, and the shiniest apple, all capture attention because of their contrast to others around them. One way performers create this intensity is through use of spotlights in an otherwise darkened room.

Novelty - Monroe refers to the old proverb: " . . . *when a dog bites a man it's an accident, when a man bites a dog, it's news.*"²⁰ This helps clarify the point that novelty does not refer to something new, but something unusual. As William James pointed out:

*The maximum of attention may then be said to be found wherever there is a systematic harmony or unification between the novel and the old. It is an odd circumstance that neither the old nor the new, by itself, is interesting: the absolutely old is insipid; the absolutely new makes no appeal at all. The old in the new is what claims attention--the old with slightly new form.*²¹

The novel is that which is news, standing in contrast to what is ordinary.

¹⁹Minnick, pp. 48-49.

²⁰Alan H. Monroe, Principles and Types of Speech (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1949), p. 254.

²¹William James, Talks to Teachers, p. 107 in Winans, p. 558.

Motion - A falling star attracts the eye of a driver who wasn't even looking at the stars. Without his thinking, his attention shifts from the road to the sky by the power of motion to compel his eye. The falling star did what the other stars and the moon could not do, because its motion stood in contrast to their static appearance.

Repetition - A dripping faucet cannot be ignored until the drips have lost their contrast to silence. In a speech, some words and phrases, through repetition, can be placed in contrast to those stated only once and thus compel attention.

Jersild experimented with different ways of emphasizing points in a speech. By testing what his subjects remembered from the speeches, he concluded that repetition was the most effective form of emphasis up to the point of three or four repetitions. Beyond that number, effectiveness decreased.²² This suggests that the value of repetition is related to its attention capturing power up to that point where it loses its contrast by becoming usual. This is supported by Jersild's additional finding that repetitions are most effective when they are separated from each other by intervals of time throughout the speech.

Voluntary Attention - The second type of attention differs from the first because the power which attracts it is not in the stimulus but in the receiver. When a listener believes that some value apart from the speech itself can be gained by paying attention to the speech, his attention is called voluntary. A student, for example, will pay

²²Oliver, p. 132.

attention to lectures or to books in which he has no direct interest, because he wants a scholarship that can be received only with good grades. His attention is paid in order to buy, not the speech, but what knowledge of the speech will bring him. Oliver points out the two normal results of this type of attention:

*It is true that the attention may be forced for a time to objects that are uninteresting. But when this occurs, one of two things happens: either the object takes on interest or the attention ultimately wanders from it.*²³

Thus, a speaker's goal must be to help the listener who begins with voluntary attention to move to a third type.

Non-Voluntary - The third type of attention differs from the previous two in that its power is found in neither the source nor the receiver, but in a relationship of mutual interest between the two. It is neither drafted nor paid. Non-voluntary attention is freely given by the hearer because he is receiving something of value directly from the speaker and his message.

The category which unifies the various characteristics of stimuli which enjoy non-voluntary attention is interest. William James said, "*What-we-attend-to and what-interests-us are synonymous terms.*"²⁴ The truth of this is demonstrated by experiments in which subjects wear earphones and receive different messages in each ear.

²³ Ibid., p. 119.

²⁴ William James, Psychology: Briefer Course, p. 448, quoted in Winans, op. cit., p. 53.

Normally, they can ignore the message in one ear and therefore understand the message entering the other. But under some circumstances the sound being ignored breaks into their attention. It has been demonstrated, for example:

. . . that a man fully occupied in listening to speech entering one ear will hear his own name in the other ear even though he remains quite unresponsive to any other word in that ear.²⁵

Such is the attention-power of words which are of interest to people.

The literature provides several lists of characteristics which people find interesting in speech. We cannot do more than identify them here. We will do so by gathering and arranging the material from various sources in what may be called: A Decalogue of Interest.

- (1) Suspense is more interesting than certainity.
- (2) The concrete is more interesting than the abstract.
- (3) People are more interesting than things.
- (4) The immediate is more interesting than the distant.
- (5) Images are more interesting than definitions.
- (6) The humorous is more interesting than the serious.
- (7) Conflict is more interesting than concord.
- (8) The familiar is more interesting than the foreign.
- (9) Events are more interesting than ideas.
- (10) The practical is more interesting than the theoretical.

These assertions overlap to some degree and all will not fit into every occasion. But they can be applied to any speaker's

²⁵Broadbent, p. 282.

delivery, to the content of any speech and the language it uses. Following this principle will result in an increased level of interest in the audience and thereby secure more non-voluntary attention.

In sum we may say that attention is the first and the continuing concern of persuasion. It is important because it enables the persuader to select the stimuli to which his hearers will respond. By doing so, his goal will be partly accomplished. But the period of attention is brief. People normally receive only one stimulus at a time and their attention tends to shift constantly unless held by the involuntary means of intensity, novelty, motion and repetition. Since it is unrealistic to expect a speaker to maintain that level of stimulus-strength throughout a speech, he is wise to rely on the non-voluntary means of providing interest. Minnick isolates a primary means of achieving this.

We can expect people, therefore, to attend to those things that are associated with the needs and wants that are at the moment of greatest urgency to them.²⁶

When the speaker touches these needs, he will have the interest and consequently, the attention of his audience. He will have achieved the first step of the persuasive process and in doing so, will already have his foot firmly planted on the second step, to which we now turn.

MOTIVATION

When a speaker has gained the attention of his audience, the

²⁶Minnick, p. 50.

next step in the persuasive pattern is motivation. The interest which maintains attention is a kind of motivation itself. It motivates people to listen. But rhetoric seeks more than a hearing. It seeks a response of change from the hearer consistent with the purpose of the speaker. Therefore, the speaker must move beyond the motive of mere interest and wind the springs-of-response within the hearers which empower them to change their thoughts and actions.

In his persuasion courses at the University of Minnesota, William Howell repeated a constant refrain to his students: "*People do things for their reasons, not for yours.*" These "*reasons*" are the ingredients of human motivation. We will examine two forms of motivational theory and apply them to the speaker's situation.²⁷

1. Consistency Fulfillment

Several theories of persuasion locate motivation for change in the realm of consistency. We will look at three of them, identified by the words, congruity, balance and dissonance.

The congruity approach is put forth by Osgood and Tannenbaum. Formally stated, this viewpoint says:

When two signs are related by an assertion, the mediating reaction characteristic of each shifts toward congruence with that characteristic of the other, the magnitude of the shift

²⁷An excellent summary of these and many other motivation theories can be found in Ross.

*being inversely proportional to intensities of the interacting reactions.*²⁸

This means that a person seeks to maintain a consistency between the various attitudes he holds. When inconsistency between them occurs, a tension is produced which motivates responses to relieve the tension. Scheidel explains:

*. . . if a speaker we respect (+) speaks against (-) a proposal we favor (+), our cognitive balance should be upset, and we should be motivated to adjust our evaluations of source and concept in order to strike a new balance.*²⁹

Suppose a listener's attitudes toward Walter Cronkite and capital punishment are both positive. If Cronkite speaks in favor of capital punishment, these attitudes are congruent with each other. But if Cronkite (+) speaks against (-) capital punishment (+), then the listener has a tension between attitudes to resolve. That tension will motivate a change of attitude in some way. To restore balance, he could become more negative toward Cronkite or more negative toward capital punishment. In most cases, both attitudes would change relative to the degree of their strength and he would now be less positive about both Cronkite and capital punishment. Each attitude shifts the degree necessary to achieve consistency.

A similar theory, supplied by Fritz Heider and others, speaks

²⁸Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957), pp. 200-201.

²⁹Thomas M. Scheidel, Persuasive Speaking (Oakland: Scott, Foresman, 1967), p. 23.

of balance in personal relationships.³⁰ If Mary likes Joe and both like baseball, everything is in balance and there is no motivation for change. But if Mary likes Joe and hates baseball, while Joe loves baseball, then an unbalanced state exists. This imbalance produces tension that motivates some change on Mary's part. If she likes Joe more than she hates baseball, she may lessen her dislike for the game. If she hates baseball more than she likes Joe, she may like him less. Heider explains how relative differences relate in personal relationships:

*With similar attitudes proximity will increase the degree of positive sentiment; with slight dissimilarity of attitudes a mutual assimilation might be produced, and with it an increase in friendliness; with strong dissimilarities the hostility will be increased.*³¹

The most widely accepted theory of this type focuses on the tension created by an inconsistency between what a person knows or believes and what he does. Developed by Leon Festinger, this is known as the theory of cognitive dissonance. The word cognitive refers to "any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one's behavior."³² The word dissonance refers to inconsistency or discord. Festinger states the basic hypothesis this way:

1. *The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the*

³⁰Fritz Heider, "Attitudinal and Cognitive Organization," Journal of Psychology, XXI (1946), 107-112.

³¹Fritz Heider, Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958), p. 190.

³²Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), p. 3.

dissonance and achieve consonance.

2. *When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance.*³³

This theory asserts that actions which do not square with a person's knowledge or belief will influence that person to change. Various experiments have verified this. When subjects were asked to speak or write in favor of issues they really opposed, results showed a significant shift of their attitudes on those issues.³⁴ Festinger explains:

*Anytime a person has information or an opinion which considered by itself would lead him not to engage in some action, then this information or opinion is dissonant with having engaged in the action. When such dissonance exists, the person will try to reduce it either by changing his actions or by changing his beliefs and opinions. If he cannot change the action, opinion change will ensue.*³⁵

On the basis of these and similar theories, we can say that motivation occurs when tension is aroused by inconsistencies between a person's various attitudes, between his attitudes and those of valued persons, and between his own attitudes and actions. "People do things for their reasons, not for yours." One of "their reasons" is to relieve cognitive tension and restore balance in vital relationships.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ See Ross, p. 131 for reports of such studies; also Ralph C. Rosnow and Edward J. Robinson (eds) Experiments in Persuasion (New York: Academic Press, 1967), pp. 297-346.

³⁵ Leon Festinger, "The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance," in Wilbur Schramm (ed.) The Science of Human Communication (New York: Basic, 1963), pp. 18-19.

2. Need Fulfillment

Another form of motivation theory centers around the universal needs of people. Writers in rhetoric have identified these needs in different ways. Both Brembeck and Howell³⁶ and Minnick³⁷ classify them as physiological and social in origin. Minnick defines motivation as:

*... a mobilization of energy within the individual for the attainment or restoration of a pattern of desired social or biological states.*³⁸

The classic formulation of man's needs as a basis of motivation was developed by Abraham Maslow.³⁹ Described as a "holistic-dynamic" theory, it is a synthesis of the functional tradition of James and Dewey, the holism of Wertheimer, Goldstein and Gestalt psychology, and the dynamicism of Freud and Adler.⁴⁰ We will summarize Maslow's theory by describing the needs themselves and discussing their relative power.

Basic Needs. Maslow believed all people have essentially the same basic set of needs regardless of the culture in which they live. He identified these needs in five categories.⁴¹

³⁶Brembeck and Howell, pp. 63-94.

³⁷Minnick, p. 206. ³⁸Ibid., p. 205.

³⁹A. H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper & Row, 1954)

⁴⁰Ross, p. 115.

⁴¹Descriptions are summarized from those of Ross, pp. 116-117.

Physiological - The primary needs of persons are for air, food, water, rest, shelter and sex. These are all related to self-preservation and the survival of both the individual and the race.

Safety - This category includes man's desire for security, stability and an orderly life. Personal violence, anxiety and fear are avoided. Change is a threatening experience because it disrupts the security of a familiar environment and a safe routine. Both physical and psychological safety are included here.

Belonging and Love - People need to belong to others and to be loved by them. Families serve this function when their relationships are right. Beyond the family we need to have acceptance from our peers and approval from our superiors. Satisfaction of this need involves not only receiving but also the giving of love.

Esteem - Beyond belonging, people have a deep need for self respect and recognition. Maslow sees two ways in which esteem is desired. On the one hand, we strive for such things as strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery, competence, confidence, independence and freedom. On the other hand, we desire reputation, prestige, status, fame, glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, and appreciation. The first group we need to have developed within ourselves. The second group we seek to receive from others.

Self-Actualization - There is a sense in which a man must be whatever he can be. Self-realization, self-fulfillment and the actualization of one's potential, are all involved in this. Related to it in the young are "*being values*" which are sought. Maslow listed fifteen characteristics and capacities of persons whose needs for self-actuali-

zation were being met.⁴² Essentially they describe a person who is healthy, whole and free.

A possible sixth category was postulated by Maslow: Aesthetic needs. He omitted it only because of uncertainty regarding its universality. But he knows that some people have a need for beauty and an aversion to anything ugly.

Relative Power. These needs operate on the basis of a "*relative prepotency*." They form a hierarchy in which the lower needs must be satisfied before the higher needs are even felt. A man who is deprived on the physiological level, being hungry or thirsty, is aware of no other need. Until his need for food is sufficiently met, he cares nothing for safety, belonging or esteem. Maslow writes:

*All capacities are put into the service of hunger-satisfaction, and the organization of these capacities is almost entirely determined by the one purpose of satisfying hunger . . . Capacities that are not useful for this purpose lie dormant, or are pushed into the background.*⁴³

When a lower need is satisfied, then the next most powerful need emerges and becomes the prime factor in motivating the organism. Once a need is sufficiently met on a given level, the person is no longer aware of that need and is not motivated by it. He is now occupied with the next step on the ladder.

*The organism is dominated and its behavior organized only by unsatisfied needs. If hunger is satisfied, it becomes unimportant in the current dynamics of the individual.*⁴⁴

⁴²Maslow, pp. 153-174.

⁴³Ibid., p. 82. ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 84.

This does not mean that motivation is static, as though once the need for love is satisfied, it will never be needed again. Since the degree of satisfaction on all levels is constantly changing as circumstances and conditions change, the same person who would not be motivated by the need for belonging one day, might well find that prospect impelling on another. Ross summarizes:

*At one time a man's need for love may predominate; at another his need for esteem may be foremost, with his susceptibility to persuasion being altered accordingly.*⁴⁵

Maslow once estimated the degree to which each of these needs was satisfied in the life of the average person. While not a fully dependable estimate for all times and peoples, it does provide a point of comparison.⁴⁶

1. Physiological	85%
2. Safety	70%
3. Love	50%
4. Esteem	40%
5. Self-Actualization	10%

The picture Maslow portrays is that of a person constantly striving for need fulfillment. His whole organism is in a constant state of motivation. Man is never fully satisfied. Consequently, motivation is always at work dynamically in every person. In Figure 9 a visual summary of Maslow's position as rendered by Ross is presented. Ross has added the "*prerequisites for self-actualization*" which he considers:

⁴⁵Ross, p. 115.

⁴⁶A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," Psychological Review, L (1943, 370-396.

*. . . so important to us that they, in themselves, become strong motivators when they appear to be thwarted or in jeopardy: such things as free speech, intellectual freedom, the right to self-defense, the desire for justice, honesty, and orderliness.*⁴⁷

3. Speech Strategy

If "people do things for their reasons, not for yours," then the speaker must not seek the sources of motivation in any place outside of his hearers. The temptation is constantly present either to explain the needs of the world for which his proposal is a solution or to express the "reasons" which are his own motivations for supporting it. The first is an exercise in futility, for people are asked to accept his proposal apart from any need of their own. The second is merely an exercise in self-motivation. The needs that motivate hearers to change are their own needs for consistency and satisfaction. If those needs are already present within them, the speaker must relate directly to them. If they are not present, the speaker must create them by what he says.

How can this be done? On the basis of the theories examined above, the speaker can provide motivation in the audience in at least two ways. First, he can surface or create a state of inconsistency in his hearers. He can show incongruity by demonstrating how one attitude they hold firmly is in conflict with another attitude they value. He can show how people they respect or love advocate positions

⁴⁷Ross, pp. 119-120.

contrary to theirs. He can show how some conduct of the hearer is dissonant with a belief they hold. In all these ways, a tension in the hearer is created which produces motivation to change in a way that will fulfill his drive for consistency.

The second way a speaker can motivate his hearers is to surface some need such as safety, belonging, or esteem. He can show how these needs are frustrated by the ways things are. He can tap the desire for fulfilling these needs by affirming their value and picturing the contrast between what is and what could be in the light of them. By doing so, the unmet needs of the hearer are opened like a hungry mouth salivating for food.

The only way a speaker can effectively use his knowledge of human motivation is to know his particular audience very well. Unless he knows the attitudes of his listeners, he cannot surface or create for them the tensions of inconsistencies that will motivate them. Unless he knows what basic needs are and are not met in their lives, he cannot focus on that particular need toward which their whole organism is reaching out for fulfillment. Thus, the primary need of the speaker is to know the needs of his hearers.⁴⁸

In sum, we may say that motivation is the mobilization of energy that empowers change. It arises from tension created by inconsistencies in a person's attitudes, actions and personal relationships. It arises when basic needs are not satisfied. The speaker

⁴⁸For a compact system of audience analysis, see Minnick, Chapter 10, pp. 241-257.

provides motivation when he touches these inconsistencies and needs at the points where his hearers are sensing them. To do so, he must know his audience so that he may associate his proposal with their motives.

ASSOCIATION

If the speaker has released the power of motivation within the listeners, their attention is automatically maintained. For nothing interests a person more than the prospect of reconciling an inconsistency or satisfying an unmet need. A man who is hungry will attend to the prospect of food. The speaker is ready to take the third step in the persuasive pattern.

The attitude, belief or action the speaker wants his hearers to accept is the food he places before them. The difficulty is that beliefs and behaviors the speaker proposes are not automatically perceived as satisfiers of the motives which have been aroused. The speaker must therefore establish the connection between his proposal and the welfare of the hearers in a way the hearers can perceive. Doing this is what the term association means. The speaker may associate his proposal to four response-springs: aroused motives, value symbols, native signs, and source prestige.

1. Aroused Motives

The primary association the speaker must achieve is a clear connection between his proposal and the motives he has aroused.

Gandhi is quoted as saying: "*Even God dare not appear before a hungry man except in the form of bread.*"⁴⁹ In the same way, the speaker must be able to demonstrate that his proposal will satisfy the need or balance the inconsistency which has filled the awareness of his listeners.

There are three ways in which this association can be made.

Minnick states them succinctly. The speaker may argue:

1. . . . *that his proposal will satisfy a given need which is not now satisfied, or will remove an obstacle that prevents the satisfaction of this need . . .*

2. . . . *that this proposal will satisfy a need better or more thoroughly than it is now being satisfied . . .*

3. . . . *that his proposal will assure the continued satisfaction of a need, and that under other circumstances the community may be deprived of something important to them.*⁵⁰

Securing this association between the need and its satisfaction is crucial to the persuasion process. This is supported by studies in which the issue of arranging the elements in a persuasive speech was examined. Cohen describes an experiment he conducted.

*It is concerned with whether information assumed to satisfy aroused needs will be accepted to greater extent when it is presented before or after those needs have been aroused.*⁵¹

Speeches were prepared and delivered to the subjects. Some subjects heard them in the "*need-satisfaction*" order. Others heard them in the

⁴⁹Quoted in C. W. Miller, The Process of Persuasion (New York: Cross, 1946), p. 25.

⁵⁰Minnick, p. 215.

⁵¹Carl I. Hovland, The Order of Presentation in Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 79.

them in reverse order.

The results of the experiment showed there to be a considerable difference in the persuasion achieved when the need is aroused first and the satisfaction is presented after.⁵² On this basis it is clear that the pattern of persuasion set forth in this study is itself a persuasive principle. The order of "motivation--association" is vital and not just a way to divide the material for purposes of discussion.

The reason for the effectiveness of this order is explained by Cohen when he says:

*Need satisfaction and presumably, therefore, opinion change in this situation demand the perception of the information as instrumental to the aroused need. The reverse condition may be more unclear than the ordered condition because it may be more difficult to perceive the information as apposite to a need-arousing communication.*⁵³

Those who received the reverse order had difficulty in seeing the association between their need and the satisfaction. When that connection is not clear, persuasion is not as effectively achieved.

There is an important second part to this study. When Cohen compared those within the experimental groups who had a "high cognitive need" with those having a "low cognitive need," he discovered a significant difference. Three months after the experiment, the persons with high cognitive needs who had been exposed to the reverse order of presentation (satisfaction--need) and who had not shown a significant shift in attitude immediately after the experiment, now showed a

⁵² Ibid., p. 88. ⁵³ Ibid., p. 94.

definite change of opinion in favor of the speaker's position. This same delayed reaction of acceptance did not take place in persons with low cognitive needs. Cohen explains this by saying the high-cognitive group did the over time work necessary to hook up the information given with the need aroused. They did this because they needed to do it. Their attitudes changed because they finally saw the association between need and satisfaction. The low-cognitive group did not make the association for themselves and therefore remained unpersuaded.

The importance of making clear the association of satisfaction with need is also seen from what happens in persons for whom that connection is not made. Cohen's description of the "low-cognitive" persons who received the reverse order in his experiment, may also describe any person for whom the association is not clear.

They are more dependent upon the order presented by the communicator, they tend to accept the information when it is presented in order and do not apparently have high enough standards for cognitive clarity to screen it carefully over time. When presented in the reverse order, they may be frustrated by the ambiguity in the retroactive process and may be left with a negative, hostile, and rejecting attitude as a result of the fear and threat inherent in the need arousal which remains unresolved.⁵⁴

Consequently, it is clear that a speaker who effectively arouses a need but fails to satisfy it, either through his proposal or through a faulty association, will inspire a response of rejection. The primary task in association is to anchor the proposal firmly to the motive aroused and demonstrate clearly how they relate.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 95.

2. Value Symbols

The second response-spring with which a proposal must be associated is found in the value symbols of the audience. If the proposal of the speaker is seen as food by association with the aroused hunger, it must also be seen as palatable by association with the values of the audience.

This is the point Minnick is eager to maintain in the persuasive process. He sees values primarily as boundaries for behavior in this definition: "*A value is an explicit or implicit concept of acceptable behavior by which an individual chooses from available means and ends of action.*"⁵⁵ Scheidel, on the other hand, identifies values as the compound of belief and attitude.⁵⁶ It would seem obvious that values apply to both thought and action, since thoughts as well as actions are weighted positively and negatively within the value systems of persons.

The values of an audience function as the boundaries within which needs may be satisfied.⁵⁷ A man may have a strong need for recognition. He may also value public modesty. The speaker may arouse his need for recognition and associate his proposal to it in a way that, if accepted, would bring recognition to the hearer. But if acceptance of the proposal also involves some form of public self-display, the violation of the modesty value will prohibit the acceptance of the

⁵⁵Minnick, p. 207. ⁵⁶Scheidel, p. 42.

⁵⁷Minnick, pp. 207-208.

proposal. The speaker must not only associate the proposal with the need, but also with the values within which need fulfillment is limited for the listener.

Values are coded in symbols which do more than identify an object. They also bear the weight of the object's value to the person. Unlike needs, values are learned and relate closely to cultural factors. Therefore no universal list of value-symbols is available for a speaker. But Scheidel, following Spranger, lists six major value types, one of which he agrees is likely to be dominant in any given person's life.

<i>Theoretical</i>	<i>values pursuit of and discovery of truth, the 'intellectual' life.</i>
<i>Economic</i>	<i>values that which is useful, practical.</i>
<i>Aesthetic</i>	<i>values form, harmony, beauty.</i>
<i>Social</i>	<i>values love, sympathy, warmth and sensitivity in relationships with people.</i>
<i>Political</i>	<i>values competition, influence, personal power.</i>
<i>Religious</i>	<i>values unity, wholeness, a sense of purpose above man.</i> ⁵⁸

Minnick takes these categories and compiles a series of seven or eight "common contemporary American values"⁵⁹ under each of them.

How can the speaker associate his proposal to the values of his audience? It can be done both positively and negatively. Positively, the speaker may connect his proposal to a symbol highly valued by the audience. If his proposal aims to gain acceptance of the civil

⁵⁸Scheidel, p. 42. ⁵⁹Minnick, pp. 211-214.

rights movement, he may associate the concept of human equality with the United States Constitution, asserting that both the civil rights movement and the Constitution affirm "*all men are created equal*." The value placed by the listeners on the Constitution-symbol will transfer by association to his proposal to some degree. Scheidel says, "*Persuasion may occur when the persuader associates a concept he is advancing with a concept already favored by the persuadee.*"⁶⁰

Negatively, the speaker may associate his proposal to the values of his audience by contrasting it with objects the audience holds in low esteem. Using the previous example, he might associate the denial of human rights with Communist Russia's practice of oppressing religious minorities.

Sometimes, of course, the nature of the proposal requires association by means of direct argument. This would be especially true when some values must be compromised. Minnick suggests four ways of connecting proposals and values which are helpful in such cases. The speaker may argue:

1. . . . that his proposal is wholly consistent with the values of his audience
2. . . . that this proposal violates fewer or less worthy values than other proposals for solving the problem
3. . . . that, although his proposal violates known values, urgent need makes its adoption necessary
4. . . . that, although his proposal violates known values, these values are outmoded and should be modified or replaced with different values.⁶¹

⁶⁰Scheidel, p. 70.

⁶¹Minnick, pp. 215-216.

3. Native Signs

The third response-spring with which a proposal must be associated is found in the native signs by which the audience customarily communicates. If a symbol is a carrier of value, a sign is a carrier of recognition. If the proposal of the speaker is food for the hunger of the hearer, it must not only be palatable to the taste of value, it must also be a home-cooked meal. Food which may prove delectable if tasted, is often refused prior to tasting when it's foreign. Kenneth Burke expresses the point of this section well: *"You persuade a man only in so far as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his."*⁶² What Burke here calls identification is what we mean by association with native signs.

Following Burke's central concept, Oliver emphasizes the importance of this identification in persuasion.⁶³ The need for persuasion itself implies the presence of a disagreement to be overcome. The speaker who wishes to achieve agreement by winning the other party to his view, will need to arrange a meeting on his opponent's ground. The primary location of this ground is found in his listener's language and patterns of thought.

Accuracy of transmission depends on using a familiar language. Words vary in their meanings in so many ways that the language of the

⁶²Oliver, pp. 167-168. ⁶³Ibid., Chapter 8, pp. 167-197.

listener must be known and utilized. Ross writes, "A good communicator must always ask himself, 'What does this word mean to this audience in this situation, in this context, as used by this person at this time?'"⁶⁴ He might reverse the process as well, begin with the meaning he wishes to convey, and ask, "What words carry this meaning for these people at this time and place?" If the speaker fails to do this, the hearer may well receive a message quite different from that which the message intends.

The barrier provided by native signs can be seen in a language project conducted by black students at Wayne State University. They identified eighty black ghetto words which students living outside the ghetto could not translate. Ross gives these samples:

Ripe apples: men with money for the taking
 Cholly: the white man (someone who's always coming after you)
 Git-Go: from the start
 Burnt one on: got drunk
 Slammer: prison
 Finest vines: nice clothes
 Nursery: reform school
 Stable: whore house
 Conkin' yo' head: straightening your hair
 Right on: giving of approval⁶⁵

If both speaker and hearers do not use the same language, neither communication nor persuasion can occur.

The meaning and weight of words also change with time, sometimes very rapidly. In a study by Ross and Maddox conducted in 1964, "black" was an offensive word to 59 percent of the Negroes surveyed

⁶⁴Ross, p. 65. ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 66.

and the word "*Negro*" was offensive to only 15 percent. In 1973 a study by Ross and Mosley showed that "*black*" was the "*preferred identification*" by 63 percent of the blacks sampled.⁶⁶

More than accuracy of transmission is achieved when the speaker associates with the language of his audience. Listeners gain a double security when hearing their native signs. First, they gain the security of understanding what is being said. Second, they gain the security a person senses only with someone who is "*one of us*." From that security grows the willingness to trust.

Association with native signs includes more than a familiar language. It means identification with everything the speaker and his message have in common with his hearers. Oliver discusses four main areas in which this association may be made.⁶⁷ We will summarize these here:

Interests - The speaker should associate his proposal to things in which his hearers are already interested and demonstrate how these interests are enhanced by its acceptance.

Feelings - The speaker should associate his proposal to feelings all people have and show how his proposition stands in harmony with them.

Beliefs - The speaker should connect what he asks his hearers to believe with beliefs they already have.

Methods - The speaker should use speech patterns, images and styles of presentation which harmonize with the customs of the people,

⁶⁶ibid. ⁶⁷Oliver, pp. 179-185.

time and place where he speaks.

Studies have shown the value of the above identifications of a message with its audience. Ewing demonstrated that acceptance of a message from an unknown source increases if the claim is made at the beginning that the communicator's position harmonizes with that of the audience. Weiss has shown that a speaker who agrees with his audience on one issue is more successful in persuading them on other issues. In reviewing these findings Rosnow and Robinson comment:

*Apparently, we are significantly influenced by communicators with whom we can identify - those whose personal beliefs seem not unlike our own. 'I can trust him; he believes in the same things I do.'*⁶⁸

This leads us to the fourth point of association.

4. Source Prestige

The fourth response-spring to which the speaker must associate his proposal is source prestige. People often judge a meal to be delicious and nutritious when they believe it was prepared by a good cook or based on the recipe of a great chef. The actual excellence of the cook is less important in this regard than the reputation he holds in the mind of those eating. Rosnow writes, "*Whether or not a communicator is credible depends on the point of view of the recipient of his communication. To paraphrase an old saying, credibility is in the eyes of the beholder.*"⁶⁹ Therefore the speaker must associate his proposal

⁶⁸Rosnow and Robinson, p. 4. ⁶⁹Ibid., p. 3.

with sources which have high prestige with the audience. These sources include both himself and the authorities he uses to support the message.

Speaker - The prestige of the speaker himself is a critical factor in persuasion. Aristotle identified three modes of persuasion. The first *"depends on the personal character of the speaker,"* which *"may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses."*⁷⁰

Modern research has tested the effect of speaker credibility in the areas of intent, trustworthiness and competence.⁷¹

How audiences perceive the intent or motives of the speaker influences their response. If the speaker appears to have something to gain which motivates his advocacy, the audience is less influenced by his presentation.⁷² If the speaker is seen as sincere rather than self-seeking, the audience will accept his message more readily. In Merton's study of the effectiveness Kate Smith enjoyed in the World War II war bond drive, it was this quality of sincerity and self-sacrifice which accounted for the impact of her efforts. Hovland, Janis and Kelly summarize:

It appears that one of the main reasons for her phenomenal success was the high degree of sincerity attributed to her by the audience . . . the public felt that in carrying out the bond drive

⁷⁰Aristotle, "The Rhetoric," in his The Rhetoric and the Poetics (New York: Random House, 1954), pp. 24-25.

⁷¹Ross, p. 159. ⁷²Ibid., p. 160.

*she was interested only in the national welfare and did not care about the personal publicity she would obtain.*⁷³

Merton notes that part of this impression was related to Smith's volunteer status:

*This readiness, in our commercial civilization, to serve without pay was taken as the very touchstone of sincerity and disinterestedness. The swift astonishment with which informants looked upon this disinterested act only expresses their belief in its rarity.*⁷⁴

Studies have shown that audiences are more effectively persuaded by speakers considered experts or competent in their fields than by speakers held in low esteem by the listeners. The influence of this factor seems to recede with the passage of time.⁷⁵ The following points are made by Hovland and Weiss in their summary of some of these studies. (1) The immediate reaction toward the fairness of the presentation and the justifiability of the conclusions drawn by the speaker are significantly affected by the credibility of the source. (2) While no difference was found in the amount of factual information learned:

Opinions were changed immediately after the communication in the direction advocated by the communicator to a significantly greater degree when the material was presented by a trustworthy

⁷³Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis, and Harold H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), pp. 23-24.

⁷⁴Robert K. Merton, Mass Persuasion (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1946), p. 84.

⁷⁵See Hovland, pp. 19-55, and Rosnow and Robinson, pp. 1-66 for reports of several studies.

*source than when presented by an untrustworthy source.*⁷⁶

(3) Since the message was learned equally well, the opinions of both groups changed after a period of time because the influence of source credibility declined. But this clearly shows the influence of sources upon the responses of the hearers.

A speaker who is not known by his audience may need to establish his credentials himself in order to gain the advantage of them. He "*may well devote the early part of his speech to the development of his own image,*"⁷⁷ before moving to his message. Adlai Stevenson did that in speech after speech when running against Eisenhower, whose "*hero status*" made this unnecessary for him.⁷⁸

Sources - The effects of source prestige apply not only to the speaker himself, but also to his sources. Hovland makes this clear when he writes:

*Differences in effectiveness may sometimes depend upon whether the source is perceived as a speaker who originates the message, an endorser who is cited in the message, or the channel through which the message is transmitted. However, the same basic factors and principles probably underlie the operation of each of the many types of sources, so our analysis of the psychological processes mediating the reactions to one kind of source may be expected to be applicable to other types.*⁷⁹

In selecting support material, the speaker will look to those authorities who are highly credible to the listeners. Brigrance views

⁷⁶Carl I. Hovland, Walter Weiss, "The Influence of Source Credibility in Communication Effectiveness," in Rosnow and Robinson, p. 650.

⁷⁷Scheidel, p. 84. ⁷⁸Ibid. ⁷⁹Hovland, p. 19.

this as "*The oldest mode of persuasion in the human race*" and still potent today. He explains:

*To use persuasion at this level, the speaker seeks to establish a Personal Prestige; or if this be inadequate, to identify himself with some institution, or organization (political, religious, etc.) of recognized Authority. Thus fortified, he may rely upon Assertion and Suggestion--he may indeed speak with the Voice of a Prophet.*⁸⁰

In sum, we have seen that the speaker must associate his proposal with the motives he has aroused; with the value symbols and native signs of his audience; and with prestige sources. These are the springs-of-response within his audience. When these associations are firmly made, the hearers are ready to respond.

DIRECTION

The last step in the pattern of persuasion is direction. While a necessary step in the pattern, it does not aim to accomplish persuasion, but to harvest the responses which have come as a result of the preceding steps.

Scheidel reminds us that "*Once the speaking situation comes to an end, the reception ends, and the emphasis and associations fade; persuasive influence fades.*"⁸¹ Under the term "*resolving*" he discussed the means by which the persuasion can be "*fixed*" for maximum lasting

⁸⁰W. N. Brigrance, "A Genetic Approach to Persuasion," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XVII (June 1931), 329-339.

⁸¹Scheidel, p. 76.

effect. Those means are primarily the focusing on rewards received from needs which have been raised and satisfied in the speech. The avenues of appeal used by the speaker must therefore be reviewed before we can discuss the step of direction which is based on them.

1. Basis

We have already maintained that rhetoric uses both rational and emotional appeals to carry its message. The polarity of the past, in which reason was directed to the mind, producing conviction, and emotion directed to the soul, producing action, has been set aside.

Today communication is seen as an act in which emotion and reason "are always conjoined."⁸² Scheidel quotes Martin Scherer:

*In principle, then, behavior may be conceptualized as being embedded in a cognitive-emotional-motivational matrix in which no true separation is possible. No matter how we slice behavior, the ingredients of motivation-emotion-cognition are present in one order or another.*⁸³

The persuasive appeal will therefore conjoin reason and emotion as two sides of a single coin. They are separated here only for clarity of discussion.

Rational Appeal - The appeal of a speaker's proposal through sound

⁸² Ibid., p. 38.

⁸³ Martin Scherer, "Cognitive Theory," in Gardner Lindsey (ed.) Handbook of Social Psychology (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley, 1954), p. 123.

reasoning is more persuasive with some people than others. The "reasons" why people believe or act as they do are not rational alone. Indeed, as Brembeck and Howell insist, *"When a man does use reason or demands of others facts and logical reasoning, he does so because such a procedure serves some basic desire or motive."*⁸⁴ One such motive we have already identified is man's need for cognitive consistency. Therefore, associating sound reasoning with the speaker's proposal is one way of relieving the cognitive tension which motivates belief and action.

In what way is logic applied to the persuasive element of association? Utterback formulates a proposal which is helpful in this regard. He writes:

*So far as it concerns the rhetorician, logic is the science of connecting two or more ideas for the purpose of intensifying one of them. The three types of argument discussed in texts on logic - deduction, induction, and analogy - are three methods of connecting an idea with a conceptual system.*⁸⁵

Based on the work of James and Pillsbury, Utterback sees argument as the process of fixing an idea firmly enough in the mind so that it will maintain itself in the focus of attention. Reasoning is used then to connect the proposed idea with other ideas already believed. From this connection, achieved by association, it draws the strength of permanence and establishes itself in belief.⁸⁶ By its relation to both attention and association, this view of reasoning is particularly

⁸⁴Brembeck and Howell, p. 23.

⁸⁵Drummond, p. 294. ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 291.

harmonious with the persuasive process.⁸⁷

Much investigation has been done on the persuasive effects of various strategies in the use of argumentation in speech. While too extensive to discuss in detail, we will summarize some of the conclusions briefly.

One Sided vs Two Sided. - Should the speaker present both sides or only one side of an argument? Results from various studies differ here, depending on situational factors. The conclusions of Abelson and Cohen⁸⁸ are helpful and we summarize them as follows:

One side of the argument should be given:

- if the audience is friendly to the speaker
- if only the speaker's position will be presented
- if only immediate and temporary opinion change is desired
- if the educational level of the audience is low

Both sides of the argument should be given:

- if the audience disagrees with the speaker's position
- if the audience will probably hear the other side from someone else
- if the educational level of the audience is high.

When a speaker does present both sides of an argument, should he put the side he wants accepted first or last? While studies differ, Cohen judges it best to put the argument the speaker favors first.

Thus, coming first makes a statement no more likely to be remembered, but does make it more likely to be believed; one side of an argument tends to be persuasive provided we have not heard the

⁸⁷For another approach to argument see Scheidel, p. 36 where Toulmin's system is discussed.

⁸⁸Herbert I. Abelson, Persuasion (New York: Springer, 1959) and Arthur R. Cohen, Attitude Change and Social Influence (New York: Basic, 1964)

*other side, and hearing one side after we have heard the other makes us more critical and skeptical.*⁸⁹

Order of Arguments. If a speaker intends to present several arguments for the same proposal, what should guide him in the ordering of his material? Again, studies are inconclusive. Some show the strongest arguments should go first, others last. Abelson suggests that the interest of the audience should guide the choice. *"If the audience is initially not very interested in the communication, the major arguments should be presented first. Where interest is high, save the punch for last."*⁹⁰ He reasons that the weak arguments will whet the appetite of those already interested and the strong arguments will capture the attention of the disinterested.

This view is supported by a study done by McGuire in which he sought to determine the "conditioning" effect of material given early in a presentation. Since both "reward" and "punishment" condition people, he theorized that rewarding material coming early in a speech would pre-dispose listeners to attend later material. The opposite would be true for punishing material. His study confirmed this theory. Unpleasant material tends to turn the ears of the listener off and thus he *"avoids receiving information from the source and hence escapes persuasion."*⁹¹ A listener receiving rewarding material early continues to listen with more persuasive results. McGuire comments on this effect in the hearer:

⁸⁹Cohen, p. 15. ⁹⁰Abelson, p. 9. ⁹¹Hovland, p. 111.

*. . . he receives more of the source's later arguments and as a result is influenced by them. It appears that even within a presumably 'captive' audience, the device of selective self-exposure to information can operate.*⁹²

The application of this point to the order of arguments in a speech is clear. Those things most interesting or most vital to the needs of the audience should come first so as to increase the chance for a hearing on the more unpleasant material to follow. Hovland summarizes in commenting on McGuire's findings: *"Placing communications highly desirable to the recipient first, followed by those less desirable, produces more opinion change than the reverse order."*⁹³

Emotional Appeal. A review of Maslow's "hierarchy" shows a high percentage of human needs to be emotional in character.⁹⁴ When physiological needs are met, the remaining needs are primarily emotional and they are the ones least satisfied according to his estimate. This leads us to consider carefully the importance of persuasion through emotion.

Degrees - The tendency in intellectual circles to give prominence to reasoning and to depreciate the value of emotional communication is challenged by Minnick. He shows that intelligent behavior is no more likely to follow an absence of emotion than an excess of it.

⁹² Ibid., p. 112. ⁹³ Ibid., p. 136.

⁹⁴ See page 59 of this paper.

He places emotion on a five point scale as follows:⁹⁵

Indifference	- no feeling at all
Mild Feeling	- slight vexation or melancholy
Moderate Feeling	- stimulating sense of anger, pity, etc.
Strong Feeling	- indication for immediate action
Intense Feeling	- uncontrolled manifestations such as trembling, flight, etc.

He then makes this comment:

*As one approaches either of these extremes, intelligent behavior is inhibited - in one case because there is no motivation, (no concern) at all, in the other because the motivation (concern for the outcome) is over-powering.*⁹⁶

The speaker will then seek to find a moderate level of emotional impact.

Studies have shown the superiority of emotional appeal over a bare rational approach.⁹⁷ Hartman of Columbia University studied the behavior of voters in local and state elections.⁹⁸ Two pamphlets were prepared urging people to vote for the Socialist party. One used the emotional appeals of threatening war, economic depression and emphasized the satisfactions to be gained from the Socialist program. The other used only rational material which set forth the Socialist position on these questions. The results showed that 25% of those who

⁹⁵Minnick, p. 225. ⁹⁶Ibid., p. 225.

⁹⁷For a vivid example of the impact difference, see a version of the Gettysburg Address in which all emotional language has been removed, in Thonnsen and Baird, p. 372.

⁹⁸George W. Hartmann, 'A Field Experience on the Corporative Effectiveness of 'Emotional' and 'Rational' Political Leaflets in Determining Election Results,' in Rosnow and Robinson, pp. 99-114.

received no communication voted for the Socialist program. Those who received the rational pamphlet voted 35% for the Socialist position. Those who received the emotional appeal voted 50% for the Socialist program.

On the basis of conclusions which Janis and Feshback draw from another study, Minnick accounts for the greater effectiveness of emotional appeal on voters by saying:

First, emotion tends to focus attention on the communication and to prevent 'mind-wandering.' Second, since the emotional communication stresses the relationship of the communication to the listener's needs and wants (and improves attention), it probably improves the listener's comprehension of the material, a fact which, in the absence of contrary persuasion, probably enhances the acceptability of the communicator's conclusions.⁹⁹

Excessive emotional appeal, however, does not accomplish the increased attention and comprehension suggested above. There appears to be a limit to the effectiveness of emotional appeal. The study by Janis and Feshback, from which Minnick drew the above analysis, was conducted at Yale in 1953.¹⁰⁰ Fifteen minute lectures on tooth decay were delivered to three equivalent groups of high school students. One lecture contained strong fear appeal, the second contained moderate fear appeal, and the third only mild appeal. Results showed that the third group was most influenced by the speech.

Cohen discusses the failure of intense fear-appeal to persuade. Three reasons are given:

⁹⁹Minnick, p. 237.

¹⁰⁰Irving L. Janis, Seymore Feshback, "Effects of Fear - Arousing Communication," in Rosnow and Robinson, pp. 153-167.

First of all, strong emotions may cause inattentiveness to the communication because they increase distractibility and may temporarily impair cognitive functions.

Aggressive feelings toward the communicator may modify the effects of strong fear-appeals. If the subjects feel that he is trying to frighten or frustrate them. . . they may deliberately reject the conclusions as a way of expressing their aggression toward him.

A third factor in the present situation could have been defensive avoidance . . . Thus when fear is strongly aroused but is not adequately relieved by the reassurance in the communication, the subject is motivated to ignore or minimize the importance of the threat.¹⁰¹

Method. If moderate emotional appeal is a strong persuasive factor, what are the aims a speaker must work toward in its use? Two things must be done. Cohen writes:

On the basis of general psychological theory, one may expect that a threatening appeal is most likely to induce an audience to accept the communicator's conclusion if (1) the emotional tension aroused during the communication is sufficiently intense to constitute a state of drive and (2) acceptance of the recommended attitude leads to the reduction of tension.¹⁰²

Cohen then describes three factors which effect the arousing of emotional tension in an audience. Of primary importance is the content of the appeal itself, the descriptions of the danger which will follow a failure to accept the propositions presented. Then, the prestige, credibility and intentions of the communicator are involved. Finally, the audience's own previous experiences are involved. The same speech may be more strongly emotional to one hearer than another, depending on how much load the subject is already carrying for the hearer.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Cohen, pp. 18-19. ¹⁰² Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁰³ For an analysis of these and other factors accounting for

Cohen identifies the factors involved in reducing the tension aroused. First, information given to alleviate the tension should immediately follow its arousal. Then, the alleviating material itself must be seen as a real solution to the need or persuasion will not take place. Instead, there will be an increase in audience resistance.

In what ways may emotions be aroused by a speaker? Minnick discusses the following list. We only mention them here:

- (a) *the use of vivid description and narration to depict actual emotion producing situations*
- (b) *attaching value labels to an idea or thing*
- (c) *displaced utilization of conditioning*
- (d) *displaying emotion himself*¹⁰⁴

While studies in the area of emotional appeal are not sufficiently comprehensive to give us a systematic understanding of all we need to know, this much is clear: emotional appeal is an effective means of persuasion, when it is strong enough to produce motivating tension, but not so strong as to cause "*fight or flight*."¹⁰⁵

2. Function

We have already noted the various ways in which this final step of direction is designated in the literature.¹⁰⁶ The language of Hollingsworth is being adopted here because it most accurately

differing results of studies in this area, see: William J. McGuire, in Miller, pp. 246-252.

¹⁰⁴Minnick, pp. 226-232. ¹⁰⁵McGuire, p. 248.

¹⁰⁶See page 37 in this paper.

identifies the function to be performed. Ross explains the thrust of the term. *"By direction Hollingsworth meant the specific and definite indicating of the precise nature, place, time, and method of the proposed act."*¹⁰⁷ When the proposal is aimed more toward thought than action, specific responses are still sought and need to be expressed as concretely as possible. It is the function of direction to articulate the ways and means of making that expression.

The direction step assumes, therefore, that persuasion has been accomplished. All the hearer needs now is the guidance necessary to do what he has been persuaded to do.

There is, of course, a sense in which direction is not always needed. A man whose hunger has been aroused and who has had food placed in front of him, will tend automatically to eat. This emphasizes the point again that persuasion is really effected in the 'motivation-association' complex of the pattern. The functions of both attention and direction may well take care of themselves. For the association of 'hunger and food' holds attention itself and clearly directs the action to be taken.

On the other hand, let us suppose that getting the food requires some intermediate action, such as going to a particular place to get it. The man may be ready and willing to go. But he needs a map and some instructions. The function of direction is to supply them.

¹⁰⁷Ross, p. 180.

Conclusions. Normally, the first thing to be done in the direction step is to state specifically the conclusions the speaker is after on the basis of the appeals he has made. But, should the speaker always spell out his conclusions? Studies in persuasion have explored this question with varying results. As with the ordering of rational appeals, certain factors in the immediate situation should guide the decision.

Cohen provides some guidelines which are helpful. It appears more effective not to state conclusions when they are obvious, and easily perceived; when the audience is highly intelligent and certain to draw the conclusions themselves; and when the audience is hostile to the proposal being made. Under other circumstances it's best to state them. Under some circumstances their statement is required.

Cohen concludes:

. . . we may state that persuasive communications which present a complicated and unfamiliar series of arguments on impersonal topics to less intelligent people are more effective when the conclusion is stated explicitly than when the audience is left to draw its own conclusions.¹⁰⁸

These findings lead us to say that a speech given to the general public would normally state its conclusions clearly as a part of the direction step.

Visualization. A second strategy of the direction step would be a reinforcement of the "motivation-association" complex. This is done best through visualizing the consequences which follow either

¹⁰⁸Cohen, pp. 7-8.

neglecting or fulfilling the directions given. Both Ross¹⁰⁹ and Monroe recommend this. Three methods of visualization are suggested by Monroe:

The positive method - This consists of describing conditions as they will be in the future if the solution you propose is carried out . . .

The negative method - This consists of describing conditions as they will be in the future if the solution you propose is not carried out . . .

The method of contrast - This is a combination of the two preceding methods. The negative method is used first, showing the bad effects of failure to adopt your proposal; then the positive method follows, showing the good results of adopting it.¹¹⁰

Manner. The third strategy of direction is found in the manner in which it is given. Since the influences of persuasion have already achieved their result, the directions for response should be given with that assumption in mind. The time for appeal, reflection and decision is past. The time for action and response has come. Oliver states the speaker's tone for direction like this:

. . . This should be so phrased that the action will be almost taken for granted. It should be presented as the most natural thing to do . . . Having carried the audience through the various stages of the discussion, he should not ask them if they will now accept his conclusion, but should agree with them that as a result of the foregoing factors, such-and-such is what they all want to do.¹¹¹

In sum, we can say that, based on the rational and emotional appeals which have been made, the speaker will specifically direct the response of the audience by a clear statement of conclusions, by the visualization of consequences which follow response to them, and by a tone which assumes their acceptance.

¹¹⁰Cohen, pp. 7-8. ¹¹¹Oliver, p. 339.

In this chapter we have examined the sequence of steps characteristic of modern rhetorical theory. Attention was viewed in terms of its relation to the following steps and its importance in achieving persuasion. Its nature of time and span was explained and the forces which produce it were designated by types. Motivation was explored through three theories of consistency fulfillment and Maslow's hierarchy of human needs. Strategies for producing motivation through speech were presented. Association was shown to involve the connection of a speaker's message with the four human response-springs of aroused motives, value symbols, native signs and prestige sources. Direction was found to be based on a conjunction of rational and emotional appeals. Its function was described in reference to specific conclusions, visualization of consequences and the manner of presentation. We are now ready to draw out more fully the conclusions which emerge from Part One of this study.

CONCLUSIONS AND QUESTIONS

The main conclusions which emerge from our study of persuasion will be given in the form of summary statements based on the material presented above. Looking forward to Part Two, we must see these conclusions in light of the implications they raise for preaching. Therefore, each statement will be followed by a parallel question for which we will seek an answer. These questions will provide a format for the final conclusions of the study.

CONCLUSION 1. Rhetoric is a form of human inter-personal communication occurring in a one-to-group setting which relies primarily on a verbal mode and a speech code in the medium of public address.

Question: Does preaching interact within the medium of public address, or does it participate in a means of communication operative outside of our classification?

CONCLUSION 2. Rhetoric is persuasive rather than instructional in purpose, consciously seeking predetermined modifications in thought and action while leaving the hearer free to accept or reject them.

Question: Does preaching purposefully seek pre-determined responses of change or does it aim to convey information with as little conscious influence as possible?

CONCLUSION 3. Rhetoric seeks the fulfillment of its aim through a sequence of functional steps essential to its purpose.

Question: Does preaching have a sequence of functional elements essential to its purpose, or may it express any content in any way?

CONCLUSION 4. Rhetoric seeks to attract the attention of its hearers by means of relating to their interests.

Question: Does preaching attempt to draw attention through interest, or does it depend on the hearers to pay attention?

CONCLUSION 5. Rhetoric seeks to awaken motivation in the hearers by pointing to inconsistencies in thought and action, and by relating to basic human needs.

Question: Does preaching relate to motivation through concentrating on consistency and human needs, or does it function in isolation from them?

CONCLUSION 6. Rhetoric seeks to associate its message with the aroused motives, value symbols, native signs and prestige sources of its hearers.

Question: Does preaching aim to relate its message to the human response-springs within its hearers, or does it express its word in its own way in the conviction that human response processes do not apply to its goal?

CONCLUSION 7. Rhetoric seeks to direct the response of its hearers to specific beliefs, thoughts and actions, based on appeals to reason and emotion, through visualizing the consequences of their response in a manner which assumes their acceptance.

Question: Does preaching seek to articulate specific directions for hearers to follow in shaping their response of acceptance to its message, or does it leave the hearers to formulate the implications and consequences of response for themselves?

We close Part One with this observation. Persuasion is a process that is constantly at work in human beings as a result of communicative experiences. The study of persuasion is the inquiry into those influences which result in modified thought and action without violation to the freedom of persons. Therefore, to think of persuasion as something which takes place only when intended is wrong. Rather, it must be understood as a force, like gravity, which is always in operation. We may use it with knowledge and awareness or we may use it by ignorance and chance. But use it we will. The only real concern is if we are to harness its force and consciously apply it in given situations. Like a river, its forces will flow. If we choose not to direct that flow purposefully for irrigation or energy development, we do not thereby alter the fact that the power of the flow is at work.

PART TWO

PREACHING THEORY

Chapter 3

POLARITY AND PURPOSE

The second part of this study examines the theory of preaching as found in American Lutheran homiletics. This literature began in 1922 with the publication of a textbook by Reu. Prior to that time *"the Lutheran Church in America . . . produced no Homiletics, either in the English, German or Scandinavian tongue."*¹ Reu's book was written in the conviction that a uniqueness in the Lutheran view of preaching could not be fully served by texts based on other traditions.

Several formal books on preaching have been published by Lutheran homileticians since that time: Lenski in 1927; Scherer in 1943 and 1965; Davis in 1958; Caemmerer in 1959; Schneider in 1965; and Bass in 1967. Stuempfle will soon publish a book based on his dissertation of 1971. To these may be added presentations on preaching written by theologians: Lehmann in 1953; Sittler in 1961 and 1966; and Thielicke's volumes translated in 1963 and 1965 which have influenced the American discussion. Finally, numerous articles by homiletics professors such as Backus, Bagger, Baughmann, Halverson, Hoefler, Hoh, Kildegaard, Steimle, Weyermann and others appear in Lutheran periodicals. Since homiletics is also taught in America's twelve Lutheran seminaries by men in other departments, some of their contributions are

¹M. Reu, Homiletics (Chicago: Wartburg, 1927), p. III.

referred to as well. Taken together, this literature represents the thought of teachers in all three major Lutheran church bodies in America. Nearly every Lutheran preacher active in this country today first learned his preaching from these men and studied their writings.

A full exposition of this preaching theory is beyond our scope. We will examine only those features which bear on the central question of this study and contribute toward answering the questions which were framed as a result of our findings in Part One. These answers require an inquiry into the polarity, purpose, nature, content, and form of preaching in relation to rhetoric.

THE POLARITY OF PREACHING

In order to locate the Lutheran tradition within the spectrum of homiletics as a whole, we begin with a characterization of that polarity which is a primary feature of the ecumenical discussion. Since reviewing the whole of this literature is beyond our scope, representatives of each position are chosen to serve as examples of the various viewpoints.

There are three clearly distinguishable positions taken by homiletical writers in regard to the Divine and human roles in the activity of preaching. These positions do not divide along denominational lines, but reflect in some degree the theological stance of writers toward the relation of natural and revealed theology; immanence and transcendence; the secular and sacred; culture and Christ.

1. Right Pole

The view on the right is characterized by an emphasis on the Word of God and its power to achieve its own purpose with only limited involvement on the part of the preacher. It depends solely on the power of the Spirit to accomplish God's intent in preaching. Since the response of the hearer depends in no sense on the preacher, he is neither to concern himself with methods of communication in general, nor with persuasion in particular. His prime responsibility is to explain the Biblical text faithfully and pray for the blessing of God to attend his efforts.

The primary representative of this position is Karl Barth. *"There is no position farther to the homiletical right than his."*² Barth holds that *"preaching has a dual aspect: the Word of God and human speech."*³ But this does not imply *"a joint action by two collaborators."*⁴ God exercises sovereign power and the preacher's role is simply to obey the message he has heard from scripture.⁵ *"God will make himself heard; he it is who speaks, not man. The preacher has only to announce the fact that God is about to speak."*⁶ While the preacher is active in the process, he is only to *"function as a human mouthpiece"*⁷

²Clyde E. Fant, Preaching for Today (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 32.

³Karl Barth, The Preaching of the Gospel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 9.

⁴Ibid., p. 16. ⁵Ibid., p. 28.

⁶Ibid., p. 10. ⁷Ibid., p. 55.

because of the command of God and the call of the church.⁸ His only purpose is *"to explain the Scriptures"*⁹ . . . and nothing else."¹⁰

Barth writes: *"It is this man's duty to proclaim to his fellowmen what God himself has to say to them, by explaining, in his own words, a passage from Scripture which concerns them personally."*¹¹ It is specifically not the task of the preacher to persuade the hearers. While he is to *"work toward a decision,"*¹² nothing he contributes will produce it. *"The preacher must recognize that the decision does not depend upon him."*¹³ Any decision which may result from preaching *"is a matter between the individual and God alone and not a necessary element in preaching."*¹⁴ The preacher explains faithfully and relies on God completely.

*The only thing that counts is to make the Word of God heard. And it is not possible to know what happens at that point, because the effect produced by the Word depends on God. So we leave it in his hands, trusting in him and in what he has done.*¹⁵

This does not mean the preacher may ignore the listeners completely. He must know them as individuals, be familiar with the conditions that shape their lives; their capacities and potentialities. *"Only so will he find the means to touch their hearts so that the Word may have significance for them."*¹⁶ But having given that much, Barth

⁸ Ibid., p. 9. ⁹ Ibid., p. 42. ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 9. ¹² Ibid., p. 13. ¹³ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 10. ¹⁵ Ibid., p. 37. ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 73.

immediately reinforces the former point. *"It is useless to worry oneself about the question of how a man can ever speak to another in such a way that his words evoke faith in the hearer."*¹⁷ The preacher needs to relate the text to the hearers and the age. *"But let him not pose as God's advocate."*¹⁸

The rejection of rhetorical concerns at the right pole is even applied to sermonic form. No special organization is needed for a sermon except that which is found in the text itself. Introductions are useless unless they are Biblical.¹⁹ There is no need to identify points in the message nor to order them in any way. *"If a conclusion is necessary to sum up what has been said, then the preacher has missed the mark."*²⁰ The only thing required is faithful explanation of the text, taking note for what it says, *"for it is unique: it is the Word of God and it owes nothing to man's ingenuity."*²¹

Barth's view of preaching was developed on the American scene by Dietrich Ritschl in 1960. His lack of interest in *"how to preach"* and *"negative feelings toward any technical recipes or 'practical homiletics'"*,²² are admitted in the Preface. It is therefore to be expected that he views persuasion in a negative light.

The preacher cannot want to be understood as a genius in communication, presentation, and application of the Gospel. He would be

¹⁷Ibid., p. 75. ¹⁸Ibid., p. 77. ¹⁹Ibid., p. 78.

²⁰Ibid., p. 82. ²¹Ibid.

²²Dietrich Ritschl, A Theology of Proclamation (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 8.

fighting against his own calling, should he desire to reach perfection in these techniques. Time and again he will be tempted to concentrate on technique . . .

*The world . . . wants to hear preachers who know how to persuade people; preachers who are masters at minimizing the skandalon of the challenging Word of God; preachers who make it easier to become Christians.*²³

So persistent is this antipathy that only a rigid interpretation of the biblical term herald can describe the preacher. He *"has nothing but the Word on which to rely . . . nothing else to support his legitimacy."*²⁴ Even the term ambassador is denied as an acceptable description because ambassadors have credentials to show. *"The messengers of Christ have no such credentials - all they have is the content of their very message, which is Jesus Christ Himself."*²⁵ The power comes only from Christ and therefore heralds *"can never perform their work according to principles or rules, which could very well apply for representatives of firms, political parties, or religions."*²⁶

The achievement of understanding by the hearers need not concern the preacher either. It is probably impossible to preach an *"understandable"* sermon and a premature understanding and acceptance may be dangerous. Therefore, a preacher may comfort himself and *"must not strive nervously toward the ideal that each member understands immediately what the sermon says."*²⁷ Matters of form will take care of themselves automatically, because they are theological, not rhetorical concerns.²⁸ *"The content is what matters; form and technique will*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 62. ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 63. ²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64. ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 186. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

grow out of the content, not vice versa."²⁹ If this seems to remove all human responsibility from preaching, so much the better. Ritschl insists, "*It is true that preaching is, humanly speaking, impossible. As performed by man, it is a lie about God because it cannot rely on any proofs and cannot force God to act or speak.*"³⁰

2. Left Pole

Moving from the right pole to the left, the focus shifts and centers on man rather than God, on the condition of the listeners rather than the content of the text, on the human means of communication rather than the power of the Word.

One example of this pole is found in Baxter's summary in 1950 of the Lyman Beecher Lectureship on Preaching which began in 1871 at the Divinity School of Yale University. Baxter considers this Lectureship "*the most outstanding contribution to the field of homiletics yet produced in America.*"³¹ His book deliberately places those lectures which dealt with the content of preaching outside its scope. He used only those contributing to homiletics, which Baxter views as synonymous with the "*art of preaching.*"

This volume attempts to answer the following questions, the importance of which are indicated by the concluding assertions:

²⁹ Ibid., p. 8. ³⁰ Ibid., p. 179.

³¹ Batsell Barrett Baxter, The Heart of the Yale Lectures (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. vii.

*What is the secret of real influence in the pulpit? What are the elements which give a man power when he stands before a congregation, and what are the factors which render him impotent? These questions are most vital to every preacher, for the degree to which he succeeds in his life work is limited by the degree to which he finds the answer to them.*³²

A writer who seriously seeks an answer to the question of preaching effectiveness within the sphere of rhetoric alone, without concern for content, is firmly tied to the left pole.

In the final chapter³³ of the book, nine answers to the above question are summarized from the Yale lecturers and compared with the principles of rhetoric as developed up to the time of Brigrance. It shows the impressive *"similarity of the rules of success in religious and in secular speaking."*³⁴

1. *The most vital element in the persuasion of a congregation is the person who stands in the pulpit. In turn, the paramount qualification of the man in the pulpit is his Christian character.*³⁵

2. *In order to achieve his maximum effectiveness (and in addition to the possession of a genuine Christian character), the preacher must be sincere, must be earnest, must be original, must be well informed and studious, must possess a strong, healthy body, and must possess a good mind.*³⁶

3. *The preacher must be confident in his own ability, yet not conceited, must have a high respect and genuine love for his audience, and must possess a strong liking for all of the work of the ministry.*³⁷

4. *In order to reach its peak of effectiveness, the sermon must be presented in a style which is clear, concrete, interesting, original and coherent. Sensationalism and elegance are undesirable elements. The style may profit from the judicious use of*

³² *Ibid.*, p. 2. ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 288-308. ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 288-289. ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 291. ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

appropriate illustrations. Its language must be simple, familiar, and precise.³⁸

5. After thorough preparation, the sermon is most effective when delivered extemporaneously.³⁹

6. The order of service, and the physical setting in which the sermon is delivered must be so planned as to aid the sermon in accomplishing its purpose.⁴⁰

7. The sermon must have a definite purpose, the selection of which is determined by the needs of the congregation.⁴¹

8. In order to persuade men, the preacher must possess a thorough understanding of his own congregation and of men in general.⁴²

9. The most effective approach to the audience is the one which begins with the preacher and audience 'in rapport,' which appeals judiciously both to the reason and to the emotions, which makes use of indirect rather than direct appeals, which is audience centered rather than subject-matter-centered, which is positive rather than negative, which appeals to man's basic motives, which repeats the chief elements to be grasped, and which includes the sparing use of humor.⁴³

A second representative at the left pole is Welsh. He differs from Baxter in two ways. First, in regard to practice, he is less concerned about persuasion in particular and more about communication in general. Second, in terms of content, he does not ignore it, but questions even the possibility of communicating the gospel to contemporary minds.

This theory approaches "the listener as one who makes sense of his universe."⁴⁴ The preacher's task is not primarily to

³⁸ Ibid., p. 294. ³⁹ Ibid., p. 295. ⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 295-296.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 296. ⁴² Ibid., p. 298.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 299-300.

⁴⁴ Clement Welsh, Preaching in a New Key (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974), p. 9.

communicate with the listener, but to *"enable the listener to communicate with his universe; that is, to receive the bombardment of data from his world and to make useful sense of it."*⁴⁵ Through an understanding of the complexities of perception and cognition processes, the preacher can design sermons which aim *"not only to be an expression of some needed and useful truth"* but that will also enable the listeners *"to do the kind of thinking that the reception of such truth requires."*⁴⁶

*It is not enough for him to be orthodox in content; he must understand something of how meanings are made by each of us and add to that some knowledge of how to help us make ultimate meanings.*⁴⁷

This approach to preaching is necessary for three reasons. First, Welsh assumes that *"the cognitive work done by all concerned during the sermon is ordinary in its procedures."*⁴⁸ He therefore makes no allowance for any *"cognitive process which operates by support of divinely guided action of the mind"*⁴⁹ apart from those procedures.

Second, he insists that the work of *"reflection on the deeper meanings of life,"* while always difficult, is especially so today because our culture is concerned with issues of "how" rather than "why."⁵⁰ Consequently, people today have difficulty in doing the kind of thinking that a message like the gospel requires.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16. ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45. ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 72. ⁴⁹ *Ibid.* ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Third, the gospel itself is a barrier because it is detached from the structures by which modern people make sense of reality. The mind which framed the basic documents of our faith was constructed so differently in its "meaning system" that simple translation is not possible. This is critical because:

*The important difference between ancient Christian statements and modern ideas lies . . . at the level of attitudes and values, and at that diffuse level of behavior where the decisions are made to observe or not to observe, to attend or not to attend.*⁵¹

This fact complicates the preacher's task because he knows his goal is to modify those attitudes and people do not easily change the way they think.⁵²

*One way to define the problem of preaching is to say that it is an effort to move people to revise their hard-won structuring of the world, their meaning system, or to put it more dramatically, to change what they hang on to in order to keep sane.*⁵³

How does the preacher proceed in such circumstances? Welsh criticizes Barth's approach and searches for a strategy which avoids "an illicit dependence on God's miraculous rescuing of preacher and congregation."⁵⁴ His answer is found in the concept of "pre-kerygmatic preaching" which approaches the listener on the only ground common to all,⁵⁵ the natural world, "the first great volume God wrote." This approach moves on the level of natural theology with the aid of insights into the cognitive processes of man derived from the study of human communication. Its aim is to prepare modern minds to understand

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 31. ⁵² Ibid., p. 85. ⁵³ Ibid., pp. 88-89.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 104. ⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 108.

revealed theology. If this preparatory work is not done, the gospel may be heard, but it will not be understood. *"To put the matter in paradoxical terms, if we want to preach the gospel, we must preach NOT THE GOSPEL, BUT PREPARATION FOR THE GOSPEL."*⁵⁶

The lack of confidence in kerygmatic content to be divinely persuasive and the total dependence for effectiveness on man's cognitive conditioning, place this view firmly at the left pole.

3. Center Point

Some recent writers have attempted to escape the polarity illustrated above with theories which relate both poles in a single view. We will review the efforts of Hall and Fant to do this.

The *"critical integration"* theory of Hall, presented in the Sprunt Lectures of 1970 and published the following year, claims *"the entire ecology of Christian preaching is changing."*⁵⁷ Homiletics has been swinging in circles from pole to pole and ought to stop it. He thinks *"it is time that we develop some intellectual maturity and show some theological sophistication in the approach to homiletics"*⁵⁸ and tries to do so.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 107.

⁵⁷ Thor Hall, The Future Shape of Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. xvi.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. xviii.

Hall is critical of those on the right pole because equating the divine and human *"is no longer possible"* in the modern age.

*To make an equation mark the symbol of the relationship between the secular and the transcendent is to deny the very things that we seek to relate, namely the divinity of the divine and the humanity of the human.*⁵⁹

He is equally critical of those at the left pole because of their failure to take seriously the content of the gospel or their enthusiasm for influencing people through personality.⁶⁰ Nor is he happy with attempts to define preaching as an event in which God speaks through human words only at times, under certain conditions and when *"he chooses."* This view tends to deny that *"in the Christian way of things we believe that God has decided to speak, and that He has commissioned the church to spread the news of that decision."*⁶¹

The task for homiletics is to *"take seriously the humanity of the spoken words and yet find a way to affirm their divinity."*⁶² The only way this can be done is by *"holding tenaciously to the faith that God desires to unveil His truth and that He uses even the humblest means to do so."*⁶³ Through a *"critical integration"* the two poles are held together *"in such a way that they are simply seen as two distinct but mutually integrated dimensions of human awareness."*⁶⁴

Three features make up this integration and they can be seen in the parable of Lazarus. The rich man is told that if his brothers

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 74. ⁶⁰Ibid., pp. xviii, 107. ⁶¹Ibid., p. 78.

⁶²Ibid., p. 78. ⁶³Ibid. ⁶⁴Ibid.

fail to hear Moses and the prophets, they will not be more receptive to someone returning from the dead. For a theory of preaching, this means first that any desire for a special, miraculous, transcendent word is not to be fulfilled. God speaks in the ordinary word of common human speech.

The second point is that God's Word comes to us by way of the tradition of our faith. In the history and community of the church, voices have spoken the gospel of Christ and *"those are the ones who speak the Word of God for us."*⁶⁵

Finally, the crux of the matter is implied in the parable by the fact that hearing the Word of God in those voices is possible only through the faith with which a listener responds. Only believers are responsive to the meanings of the human words as *"God's truth for them."*⁶⁶ Hall summarizes:

*In sum, it represents the integration of a human event, an historical context and a perspective of faith. A man speaking - that is the event. An historical tradition - or as we expressed it earlier, a community-based and community-creating message - that is the context. A confession of and response in faith, i.e. the present, personal awareness of the meaning of this message for me, that is the perspective. It takes all three in close integration, but without confusion, to be able to talk meaningfully about the Word of God appearing in the words of men.*⁶⁷

This understanding of the relation between God's Word and man's word makes preaching bifocal in nature. It relates *"both to the realities of human existence and to the content and meaning of the gospel of Christ."*⁶⁸ To focus on either pole independent of the other or to

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 80. ⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 80-81. ⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 109.

accommodate them as conflicting elements in a strategy of compromise or co-existence will not do. The preacher and his preaching must be fully involved in the conditions of life and fully identified with the meaning of the Christian faith.

The strength of Hall's theory is found in his balance of emphasis between the ingredients involved and the grounding of those ingredients in theology. The weakness of this position is found in the lack of a theological principle on which to base the integration itself. The parable illustrates, but does not ground it.

The second example of a theory at the center point was published in 1975 by Fant. Noting the division between *"what to preach"* and *"how to preach"* in much of the literature, he attempts to *"unify the practice of preaching . . . within a meaningful theology of proclamation."*⁶⁹ He finds a *"decisive clue"*⁷⁰ for this unity in the incarnation, but assures his readers that no confusion is intended between what happens in preaching and the unique event in Christ.

*I do believe, however, that the incarnation is the truest theological model for the mysterious divine-human preaching event, which is neither all of man nor all of God, but which partakes of both with precisely the same degree of mystery and humility as that reality in Jesus of Nazareth.*⁷¹

The poles of preaching are identified as *"the historical given of the eternal Word"* and *"the existential given of our contemporary culture."*⁷² Fant insists that preaching *"betrays the wholeness of its*

⁶⁹Fant, p. xi. ⁷⁰Ibid., p. xiv.

⁷¹Ibid., p. xv. ⁷²Ibid., p. 28.

*calling by affirming part of its nature and denying the other."*⁷³

Primary emphasis on either pole is termed "*homiletical heresy*." The heresy on the right is labeled "*the leaven of the Pharisees*,"⁷⁴ to whom the historic letter of the law was all important. Those holding to this pole today fear the human factor will rob preaching of its power.⁷⁵ They tend to place extreme emphasis on the original language of the biblical text, a reliance on cultic language and the use of a "*holy tone*" in the pulpit.

The heresy on the left is labeled "*the leaven of the Sadducees*"⁷⁶ who eagerly adapted and conformed to Greek culture. Those stressing this pole today affirm the human factor to the point where God's power becomes dependent on man's effectiveness. There is a tendency to seek revelation directly apart from any objective medium of grace.

The incarnational approach is based on two primary assertions expressed in this way:

. . . first, that Christian proclamation recognizes the priority of the actions of God; and second, that Christian proclamation recognizes the possibility of the irrelevance of the preaching of men.

The relation of these poles to each other is found in the act of communication. The preacher stands as a channel of communication

⁷³Ibid. ⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 30-35.

⁷⁵For a collection and discussion of these fears see: Ronald E. Sleeth, "Theology vs. Communication Theories," Religion in Life, XXXII (Autumn 1963), 547-552.

⁷⁶Fant, pp. 35-39. ⁷⁷Ibid., p. 40.

between the Word and the hearer; between the historic and contemporary; between God and men. This means he must be at home in two worlds.

On a functional level, the preacher faces a twin demand. On the one hand, he must use the tools of exegetical research in order to decode and interpret the Word faithfully. On the other hand, he is to use the tools of rhetorical research in order to encode and communicate it effectively.

*The preacher must understand that the historic Word and the contemporary situation are not mutually exclusive and that preaching unites the two in the act of communication. These are the two primary guideposts toward incarnational preaching: the first points to what is preached, to the message itself; the second, to the act of preaching.*⁷⁸

Unlike Hall, who is critical of "persuasive preaching," Fant distinguishes between persuasion and manipulation, affirming one and excluding the other.

*Persuasion is not manipulation. Persuasion is the attempt to influence others. Everyone in the Bible who ever attempted to accomplish the will of God, whether Abraham or Moses or the prophets or Paul or Jesus, was involved in persuasion.*⁷⁹

In Fant's view, any preacher who cares about fulfilling Christ's commission to "go into all the world and make disciples," will not find it possible to avoid being involved in persuasive communication. "But he should never resort to manipulation."⁸⁰

The strength of this theory is found in associating the relation between the poles of preaching to a theological principle. The weakness is that this principle is offered only as a model, indicating

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 4. ⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 73. ⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 74.

the awareness of some lack which prevents it from serving as the ground of a theological reality. In passing, it should be noted that Fant is the only author reviewed above who understands what persuasion means in the contemporary literature.

In summary, we have identified the poles at or between which current theories of preaching are located. At the extreme right are those which affirm the power of God to work effectively through his Word, apart from the rhetorical assistance of the preacher. At the extreme left are those which attach the effectiveness of preaching to the rhetorical skill or cognitive conditioning capacities of the preacher, apart from the gospel itself. At the center point are those who affirm both poles with balance theories based on the concept of integration or the model of incarnation.

THE PURPOSE OF PREACHING

Having identified the poles and the center point in the ecumenical homiletical discussion, we turn now to the American Lutheran position and attempt to locate its place amidst the polarity. In order to do so, we must first examine the purpose of preaching in this tradition.

We have previously noted that a speaker may have one of three general purposes in communication.⁸¹ We also noted in Smith's static model, the relationship of purpose to the listeners and the occasion

⁸¹See Figure 1 and discussion on pp. 13-19 of this paper.

which brings them together with the speaker.⁸² Lutheran homiletics recognizes the role these elements play in stating the purpose of preaching. We will therefore examine this point in relation to hearers, teaching and worship.

1. Preaching and Hearers

The purpose of preaching is affected by the relationship of the hearers to God. The purpose is different when non-Christians are addressed than when Christians are. Reu limits his homiletics text to that preaching which is done in the Sunday congregational setting. Missionary preaching directed to unbaptized persons and catechetical instruction directed to new converts are both excluded from his definition of the term homiletics.⁸³ He does not deny these to be legitimate forms of Christian address, they simply are excluded from consideration in his book. He is concerned with baptized listeners.

In the congregational setting, the purpose of preaching is to edify the listeners.⁸⁴ There are two dimensions to this purpose. On the one hand, the sermon edifies by a constant renewal of that faith in God's past and present acts which form the basis of salvation. The believer must be kept in saving faith. On the other hand, believers are called to actualize in life what God has declared them to be.

⁸²See Figure 2 and the description on page 26 of this paper.

⁸³Reu, p. 9. ⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 38.

Preaching must therefore awaken in Christians *"an earnest desire to reach this goal, and move them to ceaseless struggle with sin and to the faithful imitation of Christ."*⁸⁵

When preaching is done for these purposes, unbelievers and straying Christians who may be present have their needs met too. For Reu contends that the same preaching which serves to renew the faith of the faithful is able to produce faith in the non-believer.⁸⁶ Consequently, there is little difference between a congregational and missionary sermon.

Lenski defines the purpose of preaching in similar terms. The scriptures contain two main elements which it is the purpose of preaching to communicate. The term Appropriation is used to describe preaching which proclaims the saving acts of God, *"what God has done for us, what He offers and gives us."*⁸⁷ This offer of grace is the supreme part of the preacher's task, its aim is faith and it is addressed to all hearers.

The term Application is used to describe the second main element. This aims *"to produce something in us, namely in making our life more holy and Christlike."*⁸⁸ Negatively, this involves the putting-off of all forms of ungodliness. Positively, it means the

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 104. ⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 118.

⁸⁷ R. C. H. Lenski, The Sermon (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern), p. 119.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

exercise of Christian love and other virtues. This is the secondary part of preaching's purpose. It is addressed only to believers. For Application rests on Appropriation. Christian life is based on Christian faith. *"First preach the Christ for us, then preach the Christ in us."*⁸⁹

Schneider deals with the purpose of preaching in more general terms under the concept of revelation. He writes:

*. . . the purpose of preaching is to reveal. In preaching there is to be a revelation, an unveiling of that which is not self-evident on the surface of life, nor indeed even in deep probing, for God reveals himself.*⁹⁰

When God reveals himself, something happens; *"God acts."*⁹¹

In the description of this *"happening"* Schneider becomes more specific. The end which preaching seeks is found in the expectations the Apostles had in preaching. *"Their purpose was repentance, that is, turning to God in faith that God was as he revealed himself in Jesus Christ."*⁹²

This purpose of revelation to the end of repentance applies to all hearers and therefore always relates in one of two ways to a congregation of God's people. Where no congregation exists, it is the goal of preaching to gather one. Where the congregation is present, preaching aims to perfect it in faith and love.⁹³

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Stanley D. Schneider, As One Who Speaks for God (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1965), p. 7.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 17. ⁹² Ibid., p. 18. ⁹³ Ibid., p. 46.

Caemmerer describes the purpose of preaching more directly. He identifies the *"great aim and purpose of Christian preaching"* in terms of *"God's goals for his people."*⁹⁴ Preaching is meant to empower all people toward these goals.

All God's goals for man can be summed up in the word repentance which means *"change, get a new mind."*⁹⁵ This change has two dimensions. There is a *"turning of the old man from sin and unbelief to the newness of heart and life which is God's gift."*⁹⁶ There is also a change in relation to other people. God's twin goal is that people should believe in Christ and love each other. *"The whole life of the Christian is to be a turning from unbelief or littleness of faith to faith; from hatred or selfishness to love."*⁹⁷ It is the purpose of preaching to effect this two-fold turning. The first is preached to all people, the second to those who have heard the first.

Davis discusses the purpose of preaching in a way which differs from the other writers. He uses the term preaching *"to cover all forms of speech in the public ministry of the church."*⁹⁸ Therefore his scope is larger than Reu's, where only the congregational sermon was discussed. This difference will be important in our next section.

Three primary purposes for preaching (in this wider sense)

⁹⁴Richard R. Caemmerer, Preaching for the Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), p. 16.

⁹⁵*Ibid.* ⁹⁶*Ibid.* ⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁸Henry Grady Davis, Design for Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), p. 106.

are identified by Davis. Each has a *"functional form,"* which is the shape things take to accomplish their purpose.⁹⁹ Each form *"almost automatically results from the intention to accomplish a given purpose."*¹⁰⁰

The first function is proclamation which has *"a definite purpose to people in a definite condition."*¹⁰¹ These people are those who have not heard God's redemptive news, who are alienated from God, who are without hope. The purpose of proclamation is *"to reach and reclaim the lost."*¹⁰²

The second function is teaching. It is addressed to people who *"have already heard and believed the gospel."*¹⁰³ It deals with the implications of that gospel and builds upon it in a way that *"has relevance only to believers."*¹⁰⁴ It interprets the meaning of the new life in Christ, the content of faith, and *"the pattern of life that comports with the new existence."*¹⁰⁵

The third function is therapy. This is also directed at believers *"for the purpose of effecting some improvement in the hearer, some change in his estate or condition, mental, emotional, or religious."*¹⁰⁶ Familiar terms such as exhort, appeal, encourage, admonish, strengthen, edify, and rebuke are all implied. Synonyms for therapy

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 98. ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 99. ¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 111. ¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 127. ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 124. ¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 127.

as a comprehensive category would be exhortation or persuasion in Davis' judgment.¹⁰⁷ But taken together their purpose is clear, "to *remedy or improve the existing condition of the hearer.*"¹⁰⁸

What Davis calls proclamation and therapy are about equivalent to what Lenski means by Appropriation and Application or what Schneider means by gathering a congregation and perfecting it. The difference is that Davis follows Dodd in directing proclamation exclusively to non-believers, though he insists that many of them may be found in the church.¹⁰⁹ The same content, when addressed to believers is called therapy. In either case, the goal is change and the distinction is largely semantic.

The main difference is found in Davis' inclusion of teaching within the sphere of preaching. This tends to confuse categories considerably. Consequently, we must now examine the purpose of preaching in terms of its relationship to teaching in this literature.

2. Preaching and Teaching

The relation of preaching and teaching has become a primary issue in homiletics since the views of Dodd were published forty years ago. He distinguished preaching and teaching on the dual grounds of audience and content.¹¹⁰ Preaching was directed to non-Christians

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 132. ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 127. ¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 107.

¹¹⁰ C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937), p. 7.

only and its content was the gospel. Teaching was addressed to Christians only and its content was ethical instruction. These views are well enough known not to require further elaboration here.

The distinction Dodd maintained was both widely adopted and challenged. Worley gathered and added to the challenges in 1967. On the basis of material not available to Dodd,¹¹¹ he shows that no such distinctions can be supported from what is now known of the speaking practices of either Judaism or the Church of the New Testament. He shows that preaching and teaching were both addressed to insiders and outsiders and that the content of both included gospel and ethical instruction.¹¹² To underline the interrelatedness of these terms, Worley consistently identifies the speakers as "*teacher-preachers*."¹¹³

While we are persuaded by Worley's presentation as far as it goes, one central question remains unanswered. He demonstrates convincingly the coordination of teaching and preaching in terms of content, audience and speaker. But he does not account for the obvious fact that two separate designations were used, continue to be used and apparently cannot be replaced by a single synonym. What is it that distinguishes preaching from teaching?

Lutheran homiletics, in the main, has located the distinction in the realm of purpose. Their difference is not found in the areas of "*who-speaks-what-to-whom*," but in the area of "*why*?"

¹¹¹Robert C. Worley, Preaching and Teaching in the Earliest Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 16-17.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, p. 86. ¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 85 for example.

Scherer points this out when he speaks of *"the principal difference between a teacher and a preacher, between a lecture and a sermon."*¹¹⁴ The teacher explains, instructs, points, informs. The preacher must fashion, induce, provide. *"He does not discuss peace; he gives it birth. He does not point the way to strength; he ministers strength."*¹¹⁵ In short, preaching seeks to produce change.

*It was always the offer of power. You took it or you left it. Precisely at the point where you liked the old least you could have the new. Up and down the streets for twenty centuries the gospel has been hawking its wares. That is what it is about. And it is about nothing else.*¹¹⁶

If this suggests that preaching aims at a verdict, Scherer thinks it would be better to use the analogy of courtship. *"There is a knocking at the door that wants an answer. A quiet talk. A question is asked. And mind and heart and will together are shut up not alone to a true decision but to a life . . ."*¹¹⁷

Bultmann makes the same distinction. Preaching must be distinguished from both the simple communication of facts and from teaching or instruction. Why? *"Because preaching means a declaration which speaks directly to the hearer and challenges him to a specific reaction."*¹¹⁸ While a sermon may well include instructional material, it must always do so in order to point up questions to which God's Word

¹¹⁴Paul Scherer, For We Have This Treasure (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 136.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.* ¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 69. ¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹¹⁸Rudolf Bultmann, "Preaching: Genuine and Secular" in Walter Leibracht (ed.) Religion and Culture (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 236.

is the answer. Ethical instruction may be included in preaching only if it leads the hearer to ask questions of his own performance which will uncover his need for forgiveness. Doctrinal instruction may be included but only for the purpose of leading the hearer to accept Jesus as Lord and not simply belief in a doctrine of his Lordship.¹¹⁹ True preaching addresses the hearer directly and *"places before him the decision, whether he will belong to the old or to the new world, whether he will remain the old man or become a new man."*¹²⁰

It is this same distinction of purpose which distinguishes teaching from preaching in Reu. When teaching is combined with preaching, it must serve the purpose of preaching. Three types of sermons are identified: doctrinal, pastoral and hortatory.¹²¹ They differ according to purpose. The doctrinal sermon teaches because it *"aims at clarifying and deepening the knowledge of salvation."*¹²² But Reu is eager to warn the preacher not to let the doctrinal sermon *"degenerate into a dry dissertation that leaves the hearer unmoved."*¹²³ When teaching in a sermon, the doctrine must be related to life and be preached.¹²⁴ The more this is done, the more the teaching sermon merges into the pastoral sermon with its purpose of reaching the feeling and will of the hearers in order *"to move them to actual acceptance of the proffered grace, to joy and gratitude, and thereby to right*

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 239-241. ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 242.

¹²¹Reu, p. 130. ¹²²Ibid. ¹²³Ibid., p. 13.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 153.

conduct."¹²⁵

Lenski describes four elements in *"homiletical text exposition."*¹²⁶ The first two, explanation and interpretation are forms of teaching aimed at clarity and understanding. *"Interpretation most frequently takes the form of teaching, and its general object is instruction."*¹²⁷ But when used in a sermon, *"this must be done in the oratorical never in the schoolroom manner."*¹²⁸ Teaching in a sermon must fulfill the deeper purpose of reaching the hearer's heart with its saving power.¹²⁹

*Interpretation leads up to Appropriation, and easily merges into it. So also the two are usually interwoven. The objective presentation of Interpretation is combined with the subjective appeal of Appropriation.*¹³⁰

Here again, teaching in sermons is placed in the service of preaching and is directed toward its purposes. Schneider follows Lenski closely on this point.¹³¹ He rejects the rigid position of Dodd and insists, *"While preaching is not mere moralizing, the interpretation of what God has done does take some teaching and instructing and this has a place in preaching."*¹³²

Caemmerer also coordinates teaching and preaching. *"In the New Testament 'teaching' is quite generally linked with preaching as one concept, just as 'pastor and teacher' mean the same person."*¹³³ But

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 157. ¹²⁶ Lenski, p. 221. ¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 225.

¹²⁸ Ibid. ¹²⁹ Ibid. ¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 227.

¹³¹ Schneider, p. 96. ¹³² Ibid., p. 6. ¹³³ Caemmerer, p. 13.

when they occur together in sermons, teaching is again seen to serve the preaching goal. He says of the preacher:

*He wants to give clear and occasionally even startling information--but for purposes higher than to inform. These purposes are God's. They involve the life of faith or the life of action of God's people, and they intend to change them for the better.*¹³⁴

Stuempfle works within Dodd's definition of the content of teaching as ethical instruction. But he follows Worley in including a place for this content in preaching. Having both kerygma and didache in preaching is "particularly welcome to Lutheran theology with its stress upon the Christian man as simul justus et peccator."¹³⁵ The Christian, as peccator, is in constant need of the word of grace. As justus, he needs instruction on how to live the new life.

In sermons, teaching serves the purpose of preaching and becomes a "call to obedience."¹³⁶ Stuempfle is critical of the common emphasis placed on pure declaration and the image of the herald, who can hurl his message like a stone "with no attempt to exercise powers of persuasion" and simply "leave it to his listeners to respond."¹³⁷ Teaching in preaching requires "interpretation" and, for Stuempfle, that implies the use "of explanation and imagination to make what he is

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 19. See also Richard R. Caemmerer, "Current Contributions to Christian Preaching," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXVII (January 1966), 46-47.

¹³⁵Herman Gustave Stuempfle, Jr., "Law and Gospel in Contemporary Lutheran Preaching" (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, The School of Theology at Claremont, 1971), p. 206.

¹³⁶Ibid. ¹³⁷Ibid., p. 258.

*communicating understandable and to remove, insofar as he can, barriers to its acceptance."*¹³⁸

As we have seen above, Davis includes teaching within the concept of preaching. Here there is some confusion of language, since Davis calls proclamation what Dodd calls preaching. But Davis insists that teaching is not distinguished from preaching by content. *"Christians did not preach one message and teach another. In the New Testament the kerygma was the content of both. Both deal with the action and Word of God, the call and promise of God in Christ."*¹³⁹

The difference, as already noted, is found in function or purpose. Proclamation and therapy both seek change responses. But teaching aims to help the Christian understand *"the meaning and the basis of his new existence."*¹⁴⁰ He needs instruction in *"Christian doctrine, theology, and ethics."*¹⁴¹ Its goal is understanding.

A given Christian discourse may function as either preaching or teaching depending on its purpose. The two forms are often combined in a single address. In such cases a comment by Davis is appropriate: *"While proclamation and teaching can easily be distinguished as types of discourse, in practice it is by no means easy to tell where one leaves off and the other begins."*¹⁴²

A visual presentation of these relationships is proposed in Figure 10. It attempts to display preaching and teaching as differing

¹³⁸Ibid. ¹³⁹Davis, p. 123. ¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 124.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 120. ¹⁴²Ibid., p. 125.

forms of Christian speech, distinguished by purpose not content, and often overlapping in practice.

3. Preaching and Worship

The question of purpose must now be examined in terms of the time and place in which preaching occurs. Most often that occasion is Sunday worship. Reu insists on a harmony between the purpose of the Service and its sermon.¹⁴³ Does the purpose of preaching as identified above harmonize with the nature of Lutheran liturgical worship?

In response to the liturgical movement, three stances have emerged regarding the place of the sermon in worship: 1) The sermon is central and the sacrament an addition which confirms the promise given in the sermon. 2) The sacrament is central and the sermon an addition which announces the Lord's presence there. 3) The sermon and sacrament are of equal importance and mutually support each other.¹⁴⁴

Those who tend toward the second view see the sermon primarily as preparation for the sacrament. Brand defines preaching with reference to Peter Brunner's distinction between the "*foundational word*" and "*constructional word*." The former is "*kerygmatic proclamation in all its bluntness and power*."¹⁴⁵ The latter "*attempts to lead the*

¹⁴³Reu, p. 38.

¹⁴⁴Henry H. Bagger, "The Place of the Sermon in Public Worship," Lutheran Quarterly, VIII: 3 (1965), 211.

¹⁴⁵Eugene L. Brand, "Preaching and the Lord's Supper in the Liturgy of the Church," Lutheran Quarterly, XX (November 1968), 342.

congregation into a deeper, more profound understanding of God's revelation in Christ,"¹⁴⁶ and is therefore instructional in purpose. The kerygma is its base and has a place, "but it is no longer the primary note."¹⁴⁷ It is this "constructional word" which belongs in the setting of worship. Its primary purpose is to support the sacrament by explaining its otherwise hidden meaning.¹⁴⁸

This view holds that three directions are open for emphasis in a liturgical sermon. It has one of three aims:

- 1) to put the particular emphasis of the church year in relationship with the sacrament.
- 2) to point out how participation in this corporate act relates to the Christian life as the particular sermon is dealing with it.
- 3) to direct the congregation to a richer and fuller understanding of the sacrament itself.¹⁴⁹

If such is the purpose of the sermon in the liturgy, preaching with the purpose of persuasion would be out of harmony with the occasion.

The homiletics literature disagrees with Brand and others of his view.¹⁵⁰ Bagger asserts that a difference in understanding the purpose of worship is involved here. If worship is a one-way event moving from man to God in thanksgiving or sacrifice, then the sermon can concentrate on teaching, i.e., on man's responsibilities. But

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. ¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 343.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 349. ¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 349.

¹⁵⁰ For a rebuttal of Brand's view of preaching as anamnesis, see homiletician Richard Hoefler, "The 'Real Presence' of Christ in the Preaching Situation," Lutheran Quarterly, XX:2 (1969), 173-178.

worship is a two-way street in which God is active as well. Therefore, *"the reverent reading of his Word and the proclamation of his Gospel through the sermon are truly of the essence of our worship."*¹⁵¹

When worship is understood this way, preaching must set forth *"the saving factor of the gospel"* because every generation in its turn must be won to faith in Christ.¹⁵² Such preaching will enable people to appropriate the Gospel and *"will constitute a personal encounter with God in Christ for adoration, commitment, and fellowship and will indeed personalize the liturgy."*¹⁵³

While the liturgical movement is supported by Bass, he claims this renewal gives new shape to the sermon in positive ways. It insists that preaching be based on scripture, connected to the life and work of God's people and addressed to them where they are. But the sermon still centers in the kerygma. *"Inherent in every liturgical sermon is the reality of the Christ who died on Calvary and rose from the dead on the third day."*¹⁵⁴ While the specific purpose of the sermon may adjust in terms of the circumstances of the people and the central message of the appointed text,¹⁵⁵ there is no tendency in Bass, as we noted in Brand, to play down the kerygma. He writes:

¹⁵¹ Bagger, p. 199.

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 210-211. ¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 210.

¹⁵⁴ George M. Bass, The Renewal of Liturgical Preaching (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1967), p. 18.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 93.

*Without emphasis on the central elements of the kerygma, the power of the proclamation is diminished; there is real danger that the Gospel will not be preached at all. Removing the Christ-event from sermons makes preaching inevitably sub-Christian.*¹⁵⁶

Theologians also see the worship service as a proper setting for preaching with the purpose of change. Knaus goes in search for a theology of worship that is based on *"a dialogue between God and man."*¹⁵⁷ He finds the ground for this in Luther's discussion of worship as a time *"to hear God speak and to speak to God who hears us."*¹⁵⁸ Worship finds its purpose in this address of God to man and man's response to Him. When this encounter takes place in worship, then something is bound to happen.

*We cannot be neutral before God, for either we are with him or we are against him. With him there is forgiveness . . . against him, there is only sin, death, the devil and the legions of the damned. In his presence, then, we are one way or the other, because there is no place to hide while we waste our substance and think to make up our minds. Either we surrender and accept, or we rebel and reject. Where the living God is, an event takes place in our lives for better or for worse.*¹⁵⁹

If this encounter of man with God is the purpose of worship, then Knaus claims *"the only possible structure of worship"* is one in which God's approach to man in judgment and redemption and man's response in faith and fruitfulness are embodied.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, that is a setting in which a message which aims at predetermined response belongs.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁵⁷ Earl T. Knaus, Jr., "In Search of a Theology of Worship," Lutheran Quarterly, X (November 1958), 294.

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Ibid. ¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 307. ¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 311.

Heinecken underscores this view. The depreciation of preaching in parts of the liturgical movement disturbs him. He explains his understanding of the purpose and process of worship in six points. The first three emphasize the service as the church's place of confession and proclamation, where the God of creation is revealed through the means of grace. Because God's presence *"is never directly apparent, but always for either faith or offense,"*¹⁶¹ all persons attending are faced with a time of decision.

His fourth point, made on the basis of the former three, is stated in this way:

*If, therefore, the service (and this must come to clear expression in the proclamation of the Word) does not put a man squarely before the decision of either faith or offense, then something is radically wrong. If the service is so conducted that Tom, Dick, and Harry, Jew or Hottentot, can wander in and have a religious experience without being set before the last final decision, then everything is wrong. If the service is so conducted that the natural man who trusts in himself and in other gods is not struck to the quick in his self-love and self-confidence and idolatry, so that he either beats upon his breast, 'God be gracious to me a sinner,' and falls to his knees to say, 'My Lord and my God,' or else sadly sneaks away or indignantly strides out because his heart still clings to his riches (of morality, or of the reason, or of fleshliness), then the Word has not been proclaimed at all. No, the Word with its total claim upon the total man must call to decision. Here there can be no neutrality.*¹⁶²

Worship is a setting in which man is confronted by God and must respond. In such a setting preaching that aims for specific responses is most appropriate. Indeed, it is demanded by the occasion. Therefore, its content is to center on kerygma as well as didache, and

¹⁶¹Martin J. Heinecken, "The Divine Service as Witness and Confession," Lutheran Quarterly, VIII:2 (1956), 155.

¹⁶²

Ibid.

always in the service of a decision sought.

EVALUATION

The polarity of preaching does not consist in differences about the purpose of preaching. Representatives of every position see preaching as expression in search of response. Those on the right see that purpose achieved only by the power of God through His Word. Therefore, they insist that the preacher not intrude himself, his thoughts and his techniques as barriers within the process. They do not deny the persuasive goal of preaching. They only deny that the preacher can fulfill it. Like Abraham, his task is to rely on God's power and patiently await the fulfillment of His purpose.

Those on the left also view preaching as persuasive in purpose. They are so certain of this that they take matters into their own hands. The Word and Spirit of God are dependent on man to achieve persuasion. The preacher may achieve effectiveness apart from the content of the message. Indeed, he may need to lay the message aside for a while, until he has conditioned the minds of his hearers to understand it. In either case, he'll get no help from God. The promise of preaching will be fulfilled only if he can find a Hagar and enable God to fulfill his purpose.

Those at the center point have the same concern. They reject both poles as the attempt of a runner to race on one leg. Their concern is to use all the resources God provides to fulfill the purpose of preaching. The point here is that the polarity is not found in

ends, but means. The end is seen clearly as a change in man brought about by persuasive address that seeks acceptance even as it permits rejection.

This purpose is seen clearly in the American Lutheran homiletical literature. Preaching aims to achieve responses of change in both non-Christians and Christians. It seeks modification of both belief and behavior. For non-Christians it aims at a turning from unbelief to faith, from self-centeredness to God-centeredness. For Christians it aims at the repeated renewal of that turning from self to God and has the additional aim of achieving behavior changes that make life consistent with faith. If a distinction between proclamation and therapy (or exhortation) is maintained, it is found only in the particular change sought from particular hearers. These are the only forms which can properly be called preaching, and both of them are persuasive in purpose.

It is precisely in its persuasive purpose that the distinction between preaching and teaching may be found. Lutheran homiletics sees no distinction in terms of content. Both kerygma and didache can be either preached or taught. If the purpose is to instruct the hearer and achieve understanding, they are taught. If the purpose is to secure a change of belief and/or behavior from the hearer, they are preached. The only qualification is that didache is never preached except on the basis of the kerygma.

Preaching and teaching may both be involved in the same speech act. When that is true, the purpose of one is in the service of the other. When it is a preaching event, the teaching serves the

persuasive purpose.

The purpose of the Worship Service requires a preaching of the Word. The nature of that event is an encounter with God in which the hearer is called to response. Bare teaching will not do on that occasion because God is not looking for an understanding of His Word, but a response of faith and obedience to it.

If neither faith nor obedience are given in response, the worshipper may not plead the adequacy of his understanding of the message as a substitute. That is not the purpose of the hour. He must say yes or no. Scherer's courtship analogy is helpful here. If God only seeks a verdict, no is the fulfillment of His purpose as surely as yes. But God goes courting. Since the hearer's welfare is attached to his yes, God seeks the yes. Therefore, the word is preached. For it seeks a yes from the hearer in response to the yes God has already said to him.

The purpose of preaching in worship is persuasion. But how is that purpose achieved? The question of this study is now squarely before us. Does the Lutheran tradition provide a way to relate preaching and persuasion without denying the power of the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and without ignoring human persuasiveness on the other?

Chapter 4

THE NATURE OF PREACHING

To answer the question of this study, we must examine the nature of preaching in the Lutheran tradition. If the purpose of preaching is persuasion, how is that purpose fulfilled? Where does American Lutheran homiletics stand amidst the polarity in terms of that question? Is persuasion the work of God, the work of man or both? If both, how are the divine and human roles related? This chapter will examine these questions.

THE DIVINE ROLE

In one sense, the issue can be settled very simply by the assertion that Lutherans stand universally at the right pole. If repentance can be used as an inclusive term to identify all change-responses which preaching seeks in faith and life, then Russell Snyder can answer the question on behalf of all:

The problem is how to win the people in our parishes to repentance. It is a problem which man cannot solve. The New Testament teaches that it is God who gives men repentance and our Confessions consistently echo the thought. Our part in the process is to offer the kind of testimony which God would have us offer.¹

The purpose of preaching is achieved by the action of God. In terms

¹Russell D. Snyder. "The Preaching of Repentance," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (October 1944), 327.

of God's role, the right pole of the polarity is affirmed. To see how this is expressed in Lutheran homiletics, we will use the trinitarian outline Preus follows in answering the question: *"Whence does the written, spoken, and sacramental Word derive its power?"*²

1. The Power of God's Word

First, Lutherans emphasize the persuasive power of God's Word. The *"Word draws its energy and authority from its author, who is God."*³ There has been no retreat from the position Luther maintained in regard to the presence of God's Word through preaching. He wrote: *"I hear the sermon, but who is speaking? The preacher? Not so. You do not hear the preacher. The voice, to be sure, is his, but my God speaks the Word which the preacher speaks."*⁴ It is the nature of God's Word to achieve its purpose. It is more than a sign that transfers information. *"It is rather the all-powerful self-revelation of God which accomplishes what it says."*⁵ God is active to fulfill His promises or carry out his judgments. His Word is sufficient in itself. As Heineken writes: *"This Word needs no supplementation nor further*

²Robert Preus, "The Power of God's Word," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXIV (August 1963)

³Ibid., p. 463.

⁴Quoted by Harold J. Grimm, "Luther as a Teacher in the Pulpit," in Gerhard Belgum (ed.) Luther and Culture (Decorah, IA: Luther College Press, 1960), p. 101.

⁵Martin J. Heineken, "The Primacy of the Word," Dialog, III (Winter 1964), 22.

*legitimization, but carries its own power and authority within itself. It does what it says and is what it does.*⁶ Thus, this Word of God "never has to be made relevant," Scherer insists, because it "is already relevant."⁷ It has a "power of its own" which is independent of man's "language or freshness and originality of insight."⁸ Steimle makes the point even stronger.

*To speak of the Word of God -- the revelation of God in Christ, the very bestowal by God of himself to man -- as being 'relevant' to man is almost in a class with saying that God may be 'useful' to man. And to suggest further that the preacher can 'make' the Word relevant as if he could give God an 'assist' in this matter of making himself known to man, is little short of blasphemy.*⁹

Man's word contributes nothing to the effectiveness of God's Word.

Every homiletical writer holds this view. Lenski claims the message of God's "great saving acts" has "a collative and efficacious power." The former "extends a gift (forgiveness, life, salvation)" and the latter "works (normally) the acceptance of this gift (faith). Both powers work together."¹⁰

Caemmerer affirms that the goals of preaching "are attainable through this Word" which "might look like flimsy stuff, but it is the

⁶Ibid., p. 23.

⁷Paul Scherer, The Word God Sent (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. xi.

⁸Ibid., p. 18.

⁹Edmund A. Steimle, "Preaching as the Word Made Relevant," Lutheran Quarterly, VI (February 1954), 11.

¹⁰R. C. H. Lenski, The Sermon (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern), p. 226.

one power."¹¹ Davis speaks of the gospel as a *"personal Word of God to men"* which the early church recognized *"as the power of God and the wisdom of God,"* and *"by its power and by no other means"* the church came into being and men were converted.¹² Preaching at its best has always relied on this power and the results have followed. No other source of power is helpful. *"Nothing and no one but God working in the gospel can make Christians."*¹³

An extended discussion of the Word's power in preaching is given in Reu.¹⁴ The Word applies to every age and every life. It is *"folly"* for preachers to *"cast about"* for new powers, new content, new methods, new ways to make preaching *"effective."* The power resides in the Word which is *"a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces"* and only requires *"an arm to swing it."* In this Word *"is God's plenty, to win men and to hold them."*¹⁵

Reu recalls Luther's dependence on this Word as *"his sole weapon"* in over-throwing the papacy. Regarding its sufficiency, Luther insisted:

I simply taught, preached, wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing, and then while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer . . .

¹¹Richard R. Caemmerer, Preaching for the Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), p. 28.

¹²Henry Grady Davis, Design for Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), p. 111.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁴M. Reu, Homiletics (Chicago: Wartburg, 1927), pp. 44-65.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 48.

*the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that never a prince or emperor inflicted such damage upon it. I did nothing, the Word did it all.*¹⁶

The Word of God is the power which achieves the persuasive purpose of preaching.

2. The Presence of Christ

The second answer Preus gives to the question is that the Word draws its power from Christ who is its persuasive content:

*The power of the Word is not some stern and irresistable force which coerces the human will and intellect of its victim into obedience. It is an almighty power, but is gentle and persuasive, working always through a dianoetic message, the message of a crucified and risen Savior.*¹⁷

When this Word is preached, Christ himself is present among his people. Bonhoeffer's "*Lectures in Preaching*"¹⁸ show this to be the martyr's emphasis. The proclaimed word finds "*its origin in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.*"¹⁹ The preached Word is not "*like*" the incarnate Word, it "*is the incarnate Christ himself.*" Preaching is not "*a medium of expression for something else, something which lies behind it, but rather it is the Christ himself walking through his congregation as the Word.*"²⁰ The Word of creation, incarnation, Scripture and sermon is "*one and the same Word.*"²¹ This Word is "*the*

¹⁶*Ibid.* ¹⁷Preus, p. 464.

¹⁸Clyde E. Fant, Bonhoeffer (New York: Nelson, 1975), pp. 123-180.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 126. ²⁰*Ibid.* ²¹*Ibid.*, p. 129.

Christ accepting men" and is full of grace and judgment.

*Either we will let ourselves be accepted and be forgiven and be borne up by Christ, or we remain unaccepted. If we ignore the spoken word of the sermon, then we ignore the living Christ.*²²

This view of the persuasive presence of Christ in preaching is emphasized by Hoefler as well. The living Christ is present in the world by virtue of His resurrection. The task of preaching is not "to make Christ alive" but to proclaim the Word that his presence might be known.²³ It is this which makes preaching unique. The power of the proclaimed Word is that Christ "uses it to make his presence known."²⁴ Christ continues his work through the preaching.

*We are not to convince people that Christ is present in the Word proclaimed, but the Christ working in the proclaimed Word convinces people of his presence in this world as the crucified and living Lord.*²⁵

3. The Persuasion of the Spirit

Finally, Lutherans emphasize the persuasive work of the Holy Spirit. Preus expresses his third thesis by saying the Word:

²²Ibid., p. 130.

²³Richard Hoefler, "The 'Real Presence' of Christ and the Preaching Situation," Lutheran Quarterly, XX:2 (1969), 175.

²⁴Ibid., p. 177.

²⁵Ibid., p. 176. For another explanation of this point, see Per Erik Persson, "Preaching and the Real Presence of Christ," Lutheran World VI:4 (1960), 359-368.

*. . . draws its power from its union with the Holy Spirit who is always operative through it. The Word of God and the Spirit of God are inseparable. When the Word is preached the Spirit is always operative.*²⁶

Conversion and salvation are brought about by the Spirit who is the "efficient agent" working through the Word as a means or instrument.²⁷

This persuasive work of the Spirit is described by Weyermann. In His Word, God confronts us *"not as an object to be thought about and manipulated, but as a subject who addresses us in His will and grace."*²⁸ If man is to respond in faith to this encounter, it will only be by the persuading power of the Spirit. Faith cannot be produced by command or cajoled by fear of punishment. It cannot be induced by the reasoning of authorities admired by the hearers. *"Faith is the miracle of the Spirit."*²⁹

Yet, the Spirit performs His miracle through a three-fold persuasion:

*The Spirit convinces us that God is present in His love in Jesus Christ.*³⁰

*The Spirit convinces us that the curse of our past sin is covered by the sacrifice of Christ.*³¹

*The Spirit convinces us that the bondage of death which pronounces the great 'no' upon our life and which closes our future is broken.*³²

The role of the Spirit as the source of faith is repeated over and over again in the literature. Sittler provides one example.

²⁶Preus, p. 465. ²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Andrew M. Weyermann, "The Gospel and Life in Preaching," Concordia Theological Monthly XL (June, July, August 1969), 446.

²⁹Ibid. ³⁰Ibid. ³¹Ibid. ³²Ibid., p. 447.

The preacher is not able to cause a person to accept the revelation of Jesus Christ *"as the coming of God to him."* He cannot *"guarantee"* that truth will be victorious by his expression of it. *"To accomplish that is the Work of the Holy Spirit."*³³ This view is sometimes used as a resource for confidence when the preacher senses his inadequacy. Boriack writes:

*We can always take some little comfort in the fact that the Holy Spirit operates in spite of us. There is a heavenly Aaron there conveying real meaning out of what we 'of slow tongue' mean to say.*³⁴

Persuasion is the work of the Holy Spirit. Scherer reminds us that God seeks to reveal himself and does so. Through the *"unceasing testimony of the Holy Spirit,"* in Scripture, in individual lives and in the Christian community, God produces in people's lives *"the same faith that was wrought in prophet and apostle."* God reveals himself through these means:

*. . . not to compel, but to confront and persuade; to face me not with the necessity of accepting but with the necessity of choosing--which is all that even God can do, unless he means to dissolve both love and faith in the process.*³⁵

The degree to which this right pole is affirmed in Lutheran thought is illustrated by Luther's suggestions that the brightest boys were needed for service to the state, while preaching could be done by

³³Joseph Sittler, The Ecology of Faith (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), p. 75.

³⁴Vernon Boriack, "Technique in Modern Preaching Toward Communicating the Gospel," Concordia Theological Monthly XXV:12 (December 1954), 892-911.

³⁵Scherer, p. 30.

lesser talents. Since *"in the preaching office Christ does the whole thing by His Spirit,"* great human capacity was not required there. But in the worldly kingdom *"one must act, so to speak, in the dark"* because God *"has not sent the Holy Spirit from heaven for this purpose."*³⁶

The observation Obermann made regarding a special type of "ex opere operato" view of preaching in Luther, is still largely true today:

*The Word of God is not only automatically present if preached by properly ordained ministers, but it is ipso facto effective. The Word of God does not return empty, it may be rejected or accepted in faith.*³⁷

But there are conditions attached. In addition to proper ordination, as mentioned above, this automatic effectiveness was qualified in two other ways. First, the Word is savingly effective only when received by faith. Second, only preaching of the Scripture carries this power.³⁸

For American Lutherans, the divine role remains connected then to a scriptural message. Every homiletics text emphasizes this³⁹ and much of the technique of preaching deals with how the message of the text can become the message of the sermon.⁴⁰ There is an insistence

³⁶Martin Luther, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School" (1530) in his Works (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), XLVI, 242.

³⁷Heiko A. Obermann, "Reformation, Preaching and Ex Opere Operato," in Daniel J. Callahan, Heiko A. Obermann and Daniel J. O'Hanlon (eds.) Christianity Divided (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), p. 233.

³⁸Ibid. ³⁹Reu, pp. 248-385. ⁴⁰Davis, pp. 41-64.

that the church year be followed,⁴¹ though not slavishly,⁴² so that preachers avoid the pitfall of selecting texts subjectively and therefore fail to cover the whole scriptural message in a balanced fashion.⁴³ Much of the literature produced by homiletics is directly related to helping preachers deal responsibly with the assigned texts.⁴⁴

In summary we may say, American Lutheran homiletics holds that the purpose of preaching is achieved only by the effective power of God's Word, in which Christ convinces the hearers of His living presence and through which the Holy Spirit persuades them to repent and believe.

THE HUMAN ROLE

If the divine role, as held by Barth and Ritschl at the right pole, is affirmed by this literature, the denial of the human role expressed there is not. Ritschl's rigid application of the herald image and denial of the ambassador analogy, find little support among

⁴¹Stanley D. Schneider, As One Who Speaks for God (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1965), p. 50.

⁴²Caemmerer, pp. 67-69.

⁴³Lenski, pp. 18-20.

⁴⁴George M. Bass, The Renewal of Liturgical Preaching (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1967); Arthur Voobus and Henry Grady Davis, The Gospels in Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966); Fred H. Lindemann, The Sermon and the Propers, 4 Vols. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958-1959); Harry Fridley Baughmann, Preaching From the Propers (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1949)

Lutherans. We have already noted Stuempfle's objection.⁴⁵ Baughmann finds in the ambassador image two necessary characteristics of the preacher and his role. As the *"bearer of a message, not his own,"* his task is to communicate the message of his Sovereign. But his problem is to communicate it in a way that *"will take possession of the soul of his hearer."*⁴⁶ Thus, while the content and authority of his message belongs to another, the preacher's personal involvement is not denied.

*Indeed his very qualifications for his post include the capacity for forming judgments and maintaining convictions. A phonograph record would scarcely serve as ambassador. Though it could be depended upon to deliver accurately any message committed to it. Personality and all that it implies of independent thought and judgment, are requisite in the ambassador.*⁴⁷

The universal support for Snyder's statement that it is *"God who gives men repentance"* does not lead Lutherans to the opposite negation. Bachman expresses a common viewpoint when he says preaching is more than the report of historical events. It is witnessing *"with an urgency, immediacy, and relevance which demand response whether of acceptance or rejection."* While agreeing that this is *"basically, of course"* the work of the Holy Spirit, *"this fact cannot be used as an excuse for us to avoid the responsibilities entrusted to us."*⁴⁸

⁴⁵cf. page 123 of this paper.

⁴⁶Harry F. Baughmann, "Preaching with Authority," Lutheran Church Quarterly, VIII: 3 (July 1935), 244.

⁴⁷Baughmann, "Preaching with Authority," p. 321.

⁴⁸John W. Bachman, "The Call to Die and to Live," Lutheran Quarterly, X (February 1958), 9.

Just as the divine role on the right pole is affirmed by Lutherans, so also, paradoxically, the human role on the left pole is equally affirmed. The concerns for cognitive meaning through communication which Welsh raises and the concern for effective rhetoric which Baxter celebrates are both resident in this literature.

1. A Communication Concern

The preacher's role in making the message meaningful to the thought structure of contemporary man is a recurring concern. This is what Steimle means by relevance. While approaching the subject with fear of blasphemy, he confesses:

*. . . the major problem for preaching today is a matter of relevance. And if the preacher cannot be said to help 'make' the Word relevant, at least he ought to avoid the unforgiveable sin of making it irrelevant -- and there is no question about the possibilities in that direction!*⁴⁹

The irrelevance of which he speaks is a "meaninglessness" the message carries for so many who hear it today. Part of the problem is traced to a "wooden and mechanical" presentation of doctrine and a "lifeless view of the authority of the pulpit" which preachers "take such shameless advantage of" that they feel no necessity to relate the Word to the mind and life of their hearers. They "proclaim" in biblical and theological language "regardless of whether it is intelligible to the people or not,"⁵⁰ assuming that preaching is "no more than getting up

⁴⁹Steimle, p. 11. ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 13.

and making an announcement, regardless of whether anyone hears or understands."⁵¹ When a governor makes a proclamation and has it posted on bulletin boards and telephone poles, "he has done his duty whether it is ever read or not." But preaching is not comparable to that posting!

*Preaching is not preaching unless it strikes home. Preaching which is irrelevant to the minds and lives of the listeners is something less than the Word of God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. So with preaching. Its message must come to dwell in the minds and lives of the people so that something happens -- not in the pulpit but in the pews. This is not to say that it need always be heard receptively. The message may well be rejected, for the Gospel is still a stumbling-block! But it must be presented in such wise that the listener knows that a response is demanded of him, a yes or a no.*⁵²

Consequently, the preacher must know how his listeners think and speak in a language that carries meaning for them.

Scherer shares this same concern. Among the difficulties the preacher must overcome are "the very patterns of our thought."⁵³ Concepts like truth or freedom have meanings different in the Bible than in contemporary culture. The same is true of faith, hope and love.⁵⁴ The problem is that the preacher "speaks" one set of meanings, while people "hear" another. Consequently, "men have heard the interpretation which their culture has provided, but they have not heard the gospel."⁵⁵

It is this conflict between the meanings of the gospel and

⁵¹Ibid., p. 20. ⁵²Ibid. ⁵³Scherer, p. 6.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 15. ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 9.

the meanings in modern minds that Tillich addresses. While insisting that there is *"no method"* man can devise to *"communicate the Gospel so that others will accept it,"*⁵⁶ he nevertheless affirms that the Gospel can be communicated in ways that *"make possible a genuine decision."*⁵⁷ One reason why some people never really accepted is that they *"were not able to make a genuine decision about it, since the Gospel was never properly communicated to them."*⁵⁸

Part of the method by which this communication for decision can be done is through the appropriation of symbols and thought forms which carry meaning in the modern mind. Stuenpfle leans heavily on this insight in his identification of some terms in which law and gospel may be communicated in our day. One of the major conclusions of his study states: *"The Reformation heritage of Law and Gospel is most alive in preaching today precisely where its language is least duplicated."*⁵⁹ The trouble with traditional language is that it *"has been drained of much meaning for modern man."* To use it, the preacher must take time to explain it, in the hope that *"some recovery of meaning is possible."*⁶⁰ But he might better learn from the example of Luther to *"struggle to find a profane vocabulary in which to cast his*

⁵⁶Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 201.

⁵⁷*Ibid.* ⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹Herman Gustave Stuenpfle, Jr., "Law and Gospel in Contemporary Lutheran Preaching," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1971), p. 255.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 256.

message."⁶¹ Stuempfle strongly supports the use of Tillich's vocabulary⁶² both in terms of man's condition and God's redemptive action.⁶³

2. A Rhetorical Concern

More specifically related to our present purpose are the affirmations in this literature of rhetorical responsibility in the human role in preaching. A chronological approach to this may be most helpful.

Reu, who has such strong things to say about the exclusive role of God's Word and Spirit in producing change in hearers, has equally strong things to say about the preacher's responsibility as a persuader. He reminds the reader that the *"converting, saving and sanctifying effect"* of a sermon *"can never be produced by the power of human eloquence, but only by the power of God."*⁶⁴ The preacher cannot effect change in others at any time he chooses, for *"the day and the hour in which God will work faith in the heart of those who hear His Gospel is in His own power and not the preacher's."*⁶⁵ But having made that clear again, he immediately continues:

⁶¹Ibid., p. 257.

⁶²For a comparison of Luther and Tillich on this, see Wayne G. Johnson, "Martin Luther's Law-Gospel Distinction and Paul Tillich's Method of Correlation: A Study in Parallels," Lutheran Quarterly, XXIII (August 1971), 274-288.

⁶³For other examples of concern for "meaning" in the preaching task, see Sittler, The Ecology of Faith, pp. 12-27; and Caemmerer, pp. 47-52.

⁶⁴Reu, p. 220. ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 221.

*To conclude from this, however, that it does not matter whether or not my sermon possesses force and energy would be to prove unfaithful to my trust . . . I am nonetheless bound to use the means by which, according to the laws of psychology, which come from God, entrance is gained to the hearts and souls of men . . . The preacher can never shirk with impunity the requirements which every other orator is bound to obey.*⁶⁶

In the introduction to his volume, Reu spends fourteen pages on "The Justification of Homiletics" which is largely a rebuttal to those who argue that *"a science of preaching"* is either dangerous or unnecessary. The danger is seen in a reliance on rhetoric which is suspect because of its historic abuses. Reu answers by saying, *"The fault in this case lies not with rhetoric, but in the character of its teachers and practitioners."*⁶⁷

Those who claim homiletics is not necessary do so because *"the Holy Spirit of God alone makes a successful preacher."* While agreeing with this, Reu maintains that *"it does not follow that the Holy Spirit will put the words in the preacher's mouth without the latter's own diligent labor."*⁶⁸ Nor will he accept the argument that preachers are made by nature rather than taught. For *"nature's gifts need to be brought into complete and harmonious realization."*⁶⁹

The relationship between the preacher's ability, his training and the Spirit of God are clarified by analogy. The preacher of the Word is compared to a ship setting sail for a distant port.

The science of Homiletics equips it with rudder and compass, but the wind that is to swell the sails must come from above. No

⁶⁶*ibid.* ⁶⁷*ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶⁸*ibid.*, p. 16. ⁶⁹*ibid.*, p. 18.

*human art or science can take the place of God's Spirit; nevertheless without the rudder and compass of art the ship will never reach port.*⁷⁰

A whole section of this book is devoted to "The Sermon as Oration"⁷¹ and the insights of rhetoric are actively at work throughout its discussion of preaching. Persuasion is the key word in its rhetorical concern, though it operates on the faculty psychology of the 18th Century.⁷² Yet Reu overcomes the "*conviction-persuasion*" duality in a remarkable way for his day.⁷³ The sermon aims to influence people through "*their understanding, their emotions, and their will.*"⁷⁴

Lenski does not develop the rhetorical aspect to preaching in his book. But he affirms it in two ways. First, he has a section on "Art in the Sermon"⁷⁵ in which he says "*the sum and substance of Homiletics*" is the unfolding of a single principle: "*As between two ways of doing a thing discard the one that is inferior, choose the one that is better.*"⁷⁶ The presence of certain art features is "*better*" than their absence. One of the three "*art features native to the sermon*" is Rhetoric. A "*thorough knowledge of Rhetoric*" is demanded but not taught by Homiletics, just as logic, psychology and languages are demanded, but not taught by it.⁷⁷

The second affirmation of Rhetoric is found in a chapter where "The Elaboration According to Psychological Norms" is discussed.⁷⁸

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 19. ⁷¹Ibid., pp. 170-243 ⁷²cf. Ibid., p. 171.

⁷³See page 23 of this paper. ⁷⁴Reu, p. 170.

⁷⁵Lenski, pp. 61-73. ⁷⁶Ibid., p. 62.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 71. ⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 262-286.

He begins the chapter by insisting that the preacher aims at the heart of the hearers. Psychologically this means *"the sermon is to reach the intellect, the emotions, and most especially, the will."*⁷⁹ In order to do this, the preacher must shape his material according to the norms by which the will acts in religious things. He ends the chapter with a strong statement of the human role.

*Unless the preacher moves the will his preaching is only as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The will is not moved aright unless its psychological norms are obeyed in preaching. But when they are obeyed genuine results follow. If this kind of preaching fails, it fails just as Christ and His apostles failed. Some remain obdurate. The will of man has the terrible power to say no even unto God, and to take the consequences. But where the norms of the will are met, the preacher is guiltless, even as was Christ and the apostles.*⁸⁰

These psychological norms are equivalent to persuasion principles today.

The last half of Schneider's book leans very heavily on Lenski. While it therefore does not discuss rhetoric in any detail, it affirms, *"All the principles of public speaking surely apply and must be known to the preacher."*⁸¹

In Caemmerer's book we find the only Lutheran homiletics text which knows and develops contemporary rhetorical method. The first section deals with *"preaching and God"* and the second section with *"preaching and people."* In the former the divine role is affirmed. In the latter the human role is defined as persuasion. *"Since*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 262. ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

⁸¹ Schneider, p. 104.

preaching employs human language and directs itself to human nature, it shares the properties of all good public address."⁸² He presents the term persuasion as *"the psychological counterpart of what in theological terms we have been calling preaching to repentance--working a change in the hearer."*⁸³

The goals in preaching relate to both faith and life. The preacher uses one lever, the power of the Spirit, resting on one fulcrum, the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.⁸⁴ He is neither a humanistic practitioner or a practical psychologist, trying to win approval or make things easy for people. But nevertheless, *"the Christian preacher is in the most exact sense a persuader."*⁸⁵ This does not suggest in any sense that he tries *"to make the judgment of God sweetish and palatable; to make the Gospel of God popular and sentimental."*⁸⁶ Rather he is there to help his hearers do what they themselves cannot do; confront themselves; confront God; and change.

While the preacher cannot *"add to the power of the Word of God,"* which is the only means of changing the human heart, his task is to find approaches for that Word so that it may enter the heart and do its work. For God's Word reaches the heart *"through the same channels of hearing and attention that any other word must use."*⁸⁷ Therefore, the preacher must *"ceaselessly explore the human resources for hearing*

⁸²Caemmerer, p. 35. ⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 38. ⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 39. ⁸⁷Ibid., p. 42.

and pondering the Word of God."⁸⁸ The almighty God is fatherly enough to speak in human language and employ human mechanisms of learning. "But why shouldn't He? He made them. Let the preacher as a workman for God have enough respect for them to learn to use them."⁸⁹

Thielicke formally addresses the subject of rhetoric in connection with his admiration and introduction of Spurgeon. While cautious of "art for art's sake" and "striving for psychological effect," he maintains that heathen rhetoric may be "baptized and made a part of the activity of the community of Christ."⁹⁰ He compares the relation of rhetoric and preaching to the relation of philology and exegesis. In Christian service, they function in exactly the same way they do in ordinary application.

Thielicke raises a penetrating question for those preachers in the present day who comfort themselves on the sofa of the Word's power.

*Have we not taken the perfectly proper recognition that it is not we but the Word itself that creates a hearing for itself and made of that recognition a 'pretext for evil,' an excuse for slovenly neglect of rhetoric?*⁹¹

He sees a misconception of the doctrine of justification at work when "by faith alone" comes to mean "abstention from works, including the

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 45. ⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Helmut Thielicke, Encounter with Spurgeon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p. 16.

⁹¹ Ibid.

work of rhetoric."⁹² The customary lack of attention and response to our preaching does not cause us concern because we persuade ourselves that *"the offense of the Gospel"* is at work. We are even pleased with our *"miserable rhetoric"* because *"the wretchedness of the vessel"* thereby enhances the treasure it carries.

Rhetoric has experienced the same *"bogy"*⁹³ status that science was given in the church. Reasons once valid for that have been long since overcome. Yet we continue to attach *"our anxiety complexes to it"* by fearing the curse of *"man cooperating as a partner in salvation."* In reality, we are committing the other heresy, against which both Paul and Luther fought, by continuing rhetorical sin in order that grace may abound. Belonging to Christ does not mean the neglect of human resources.

*This means, after all, that you belong to him with all you have and are and are capable of, including your rhetorical resources. Freedom in Christ is no soft spot for the lazy. And the grace that does not enlist a man to serve but is misused as a license for Christian sloppiness and dilettante slovenliness degenerates from costly to cheap grace.*⁹⁴

Therefore, not only the *"what"* but also the *"how"* of preaching becomes a part of our spiritual life. Both of them have consequences for preaching because the method as well as the content *"bears testimony or hardens people against it, opens hearts or closes them, makes the message convincing or blocks the way to faith."*⁹⁵

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 17. ⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18. ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Since all American Lutheran homileticians have not directly addressed themselves either positively or negatively to the issue of persuasion, we cannot claim universal support for the view that persuasion is part of the human role in preaching. But on the basis of the major literature in which this issue is discussed, there is overwhelming support for that claim. In terms of the human role, the left pole of preaching is affirmed.

3. A Minority Concern

There is one major homiletical voice that withholds full support for the practice of rhetoric in the human role in preaching. Davis deals with this hesitance at length and we must hear his objection, since he expresses views often encountered in Lutheran circles, though not otherwise voiced in this literature. Since, on the basis of purpose, we have already excluded his category of teaching from our understanding of preaching, we will look at Davis' attitude toward persuasion in connection with proclamation and therapy.

Taking the latter first, we note his agreement that speech addressed to Christians for the purpose of *"effecting some improvement in the hearer, some change in his state or condition, mental, emotional, or religious,"*⁹⁶ is indeed persuasive in character. On the basis of his own word studies,⁹⁷ he admits:

⁹⁶Davis, p. 127. ⁹⁷Ibid., cf. pp. 127-132.

. . . that in the apostolic church this third functional form of speech (whatever it is called: therapy, exhortation, persuasion) has not only a legitimate but a necessary place in the public ministry.⁹⁸

He further agrees that in preaching today "there is a place for therapeutic, hortatory, or persuasive speech. There is no question about that."⁹⁹

Yet, Davis is extremely uncomfortable with any emphasis on persuasion. His choice of the term therapy, admittedly not a speech term in the New Testament,¹⁰⁰ is only one indication of his discomfort. The major indication appears when his reluctant assurance of "a place" for persuasion is immediately followed by "serious questions about it."¹⁰¹ He worries about its priority in relation to the gospel and teaching and power. He worries about the proportion given to it in the sermon. He sees a serious danger that the gospel may be displaced and replaced by it. It may even lead men to "the blasphemy of thinking God is mistaken about men: that it does not require the gospel to save men, but only the right kind of teaching and persuasion."¹⁰² He fears "premature attempts at therapy" where people will be soothed before they are healed. He is concerned about the motives which will be used as a basis for appeal to non-Christians.¹⁰³ After reviewing the motives appealed to by the Apostles, he writes:

Any successful appeal to selfish motives, however 'religious' the form it takes, leads my victim farther away from the lordship of Christ. I cannot sell Christ, I cannot sell the mysteries of

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 132. ⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 133. ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 127.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 133. ¹⁰² Ibid., p. 133. ¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 134-136.

*Christ, by a skillful appeal to motives of self-interest. I can only sell him short.*¹⁰⁴

Since Davis has a fearful reaction to the function of persuasion in those speech forms to which he agrees it belongs, we are not surprised to discover its prohibition in connection with proclamation. By this term Davis means what Dodd meant by preaching, and accepts his definition of content and audience, though he insists that it belongs in today's Sunday preaching because there are so many unbelievers present.¹⁰⁵

Four factors are involved in this form of communication, each with a specified level of importance. The Sender is primary, the substance of the message is next, and the people addressed are third.

*"The preacher comes fourth in importance. Rather, the preacher has no importance other than as an instrument, but he has a great importance as an instrument."*¹⁰⁶ The preacher's role is to transmit a message.

The message intends to *"serve as the channel of a personal transaction between God and the soul of the hearer"* which creates the new life in Christ.¹⁰⁷ The message is the medium, not the preacher.

This message is clearly persuasive in purpose and form.

*It takes the form of an announcement that waits to be heard and believed, a direct call from God to be answered, a personal offer to be embraced, a personal promise to be trusted and acted upon.*¹⁰⁸

But the purpose is fulfilled by the gospel itself without any

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 136. ¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 109-110. ¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 111. ¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

rhetorical assistance from the one proclaiming it.

To demonstrate the truth of this claim, Davis refers to the speeches in Acts, particularly the message of Peter to Cornelius in Acts 10. He examines its contents and then asserts that by any standard of speech criticism, no rhetoric is evident. No oratorical, logical, illustrative or psychological tactics are used. He continues:

*It describes no need of the listeners, defines no problem, makes no appeal to motives or emotions. It has no sort of salesmanship in it. It uses no devices to secure or hold interest, to impress, or to charm. It does, however, proclaim the basic points of the kerygma. It is functional; it preaches the gospel.*¹⁰⁹

This message in rhetorically bare form is then recommended as a model "young preachers" may examine to discover the secret of preaching's power in the early church. By this kind of preaching the Roman Empire was won. *"It was not the act of speaking that did it. It was God at work in the gospel."*¹¹⁰ This is followed by two pages praising the right pole and warning about the dangers on the left.

We will need to evaluate Davis' position before going on since he raises the only objection to persuasion as part of the human role in preaching. First, we should note that Davis leans on Barth and Dodd in ways no other Lutherans in this literature do. He suggests that preachers will need to be aware of *"the critical judgment of biblical scholars and theologians"*¹¹¹ in evaluating their work. The only ones mentioned are Barth and Dodd, who presumably now serve as the standard in determining the nature of preaching. We have already seen

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 113-114. ¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 114. ¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 107.

the inadequacy of Dodd. Later we will note the Lutheran objection to Barth.

Second, we must ask if Peter's sermon to Cornelius really supports the conclusions on the human role in preaching that are drawn from it. It is widely agreed that the sermons in Acts are used by the author to advance his own purposes at the points where they appear. As Worley shows: *"The writer inserted the speeches into a text as a means of developing a book with a message, and the speeches cannot be considered apart from the total plan of the book."*¹¹² The purpose of the speech in Acts 10 is hardly intended to demonstrate the content and style of Christian preaching. This should be obvious from the fact that the speech was not only unfinished, but that it had barely started.¹¹³ We cannot take as a model for preaching a speech that was not delivered beyond its introduction.

Luke's purpose is not to demonstrate the method of preaching to Gentiles, either. For the concern of this section in Acts is not the persuasion of Cornelius, but the persuasion of the Church.¹¹⁴ Gentiles are acceptable to God and must be accepted by his people, both as objects of their witness and subjects of their fellowship.

¹¹²Robert C. Worley, Preaching and Teaching in the Earliest Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1907), p. 44.

¹¹³cf. Acts 11:15, "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them. . ."

¹¹⁴cf. Frank W. Beare, "Speaking in Tongues," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXIII (September 1964), 229-245. "The center of interest here is . . . the admission of Gentiles to the community of God's people and to a share in all the blessings of the Gospel of Christ," p. 239.

This section shows how the church was persuaded of that. When this is understood, the persuasion occurring in Acts 10 is clear.

Even a rapid and surface reading of this section will show the process of persuasion actively at work. It is repeated three times, once with Peter, once with those who traveled with him, and once with those who heard the report of their experiences.

The persuasion of Peter is seen in 10:9-23a. Attention is captured through the involuntary means of a vision which occurred while Peter was hungry and shaped itself in terms of that interest. *"Rise, Peter; kill and eat."* (v. 13) Motivation is provided by the cognitive inconsistency¹¹⁵ created by this vision. The Lord (+) commands an action contrary (-) to Peter's faith (+). An imbalance is created and Peter resists change. *"No, Lord . . . I have never!"* (v. 14) Association is then made between God (+) and cleansed animals (+). *"What God has cleansed, you must not call common."* (v. 15) This event is repeated three times for reinforcement. (v. 16) The persuasion process does its work in Peter's intra-personal communication system. Direction is then given. Three men will be at the door. *"Rise and go down, and accompany them without hesitation; for I have sent them."* (v. 20) The fact that Peter has been persuaded is shown from his conduct change: *"So he called them in to be his guests . . . The next day he rose and went off with them."* (v. 23)

The persuasion of "some of the brethren from Joppa" (v. 23) who accompanied Peter occurs next. Attention is automatic in the

¹¹⁵cf. pp. 52-56 of this paper.

drama of their going. Interest could hardly be higher. Motivation through speech is aroused when Peter begins with an explanation for his discrepant (unlawful) behavior (v. 28) in entering the house of a Gentile. Those with him hear Peter (+) testify against (-) something they favor (+). *"I should not call any man common or unclean."* (v. 28) Their cognitive balance is thereby upset. This is reinforced when God (+) is said to have heard the prayer (+) of a Gentile (-). (v. 31) Association then takes place. It begins by Peter's associating a new attitude toward Gentiles with God's attitude toward them. (v. 34-35) It continues through the association of the Christian message with Gentiles by preaching it to them. (v. 36-42) It concludes by an association with Hebrew value symbols: *"All the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in (Christ) receives forgiveness of sins through his name."* (v. 43) Finally, the Pentecost event is associated with these Gentiles!

Who is *"amazed"* at this? Peter? No! But *"the believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter."* (v. 45). This association of the Spirit, manifested in tongues, was the evidence that clinched the relief of their cognitive tension: *"The gift of the Holy Spirit has been poured out even on the Gentiles."* (v. 45) Peter then provides the direction. That this whole event is aimed not at Cornelius, but at Peter's companions is clear from the fact that he suggests the direction to them! *"Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people?"* (v. 47) They could no longer behave in harmony with old attitudes. They would not deny the baptism. They were persuaded.

The third instance of persuasion takes place in the following section (11:1-18) when this group returns home. We will not trace out its features here, for it would carry our point no further. It must only be noticed that the number of associations increase as the number of people to be persuaded increase. A compilation of both preceding persuasive episodes is repeated in detail. It should also be noted that divine intervention "*did the whole thing*" in only the first instance. Once God had a human witness, divine and human participation are coordinate in the second instance. With sufficient witnesses, only human testimony is used in the third instance. It is by faith alone that God's work is seen in their persuasive success. It may be instructive to ask: "Which of these three situations is most similar to the preacher's context within the Church today?"

The point here is this. Far from demonstrating the absence of persuasion at work, Acts 10 is a dramatic demonstration of it and of the divine and human roles in coordinated action. To draw conclusions on the method of preaching from this passage is totally to misunderstand its purpose in Acts. To deny human involvement in the divine action of persuasion on the basis of this passage is to misread the very process it describes. To deny the presence of rhetorical features in this incident, is to demonstrate a misunderstanding of contemporary persuasion theory.

Davis also seeks support for the negation of persuasion in the human role by appeal to Paul's self-understanding of his relation to rhetoric. Davis warns: "*There is always danger that a form of speech which goes beyond function will cloud the source and confuse the view*

of the Gospel's power."¹¹⁶ That Paul supports this is supposedly proven by one passage, I Corinthians 2:1-5, which reads in part:

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom . . . and my speech and message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Paul is certainly affirming the divine role on the right pole here.

But is he denying the use of persuasive speech in human presentation?

In the first part, the thrust of the passage is: "*I have not come as a superior person in speech or wisdom.*"¹¹⁷ This is a plain statement of Paul's own weakness in regard both to speech skill and human wisdom. It is not a comment on persuasion. But the second part is.

The Greek word for plausible is the adjective form πτελοῦς meaning persuasive. The text in this passage is questioned, because this word appears nowhere else in the adjective form. But that hardly seems reason to reject it, for the form is correct as it stands. What is negated here is not primarily the adjective, but the noun it modifies. It is not persuasion, but "*persuasive words of wisdom*" that is denied. In other words, Paul is contrasting the content of his message primarily and its form only secondarily. He is contrasting the power of the Spirit through the message of the cross with persuasive words of wisdom. His conclusion makes this clear. He wants

¹¹⁶Davis, p. 114.

¹¹⁷Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon, ed. by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 849.

their faith based "in the power of God" not "the wisdom of men." To affirm the persuasive power of the Spirit is not to deny the human use of persuasion except when human wisdom is its content.

The truth of this interpretation can be seen clearly from another passage to the Corinthians where Paul positively affirms his practice of persuasion. Following a reminder of the judgment seat of Christ, before which all will one day stand, he writes:

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but what we are known to God, and I hope it is known also to you. (II Corinthians 5:11)

Bultmann considers it possible that this statement is a technical description of the Apostles' calling. He considers it so particularly in the light of Acts 18:4, 19:8 and 28:23, which "show that ΠΕΛΘΕΙΝ can be used technically in this sense."¹¹⁸ These passages describe Paul as boldly attempting to persuade Jews and Greeks through techniques of argument and testimony, and often succeeding.

In Acts 13:43, 17:4 and 28:24, we find the same word used to describe the response to Paul's preaching, saying that many were persuaded. In the 28:24 passage, the opposing responses to Paul's preaching are described by a contrast between those who were persuaded and those who disbelieved. In this passage, to believe and to be persuaded are synonymous terms.

From the use of ΠΕΛΘΩ in the New Testament, it is clear that both Paul and Luke considered persuasion to be an accurate

¹¹⁸ Rudolf Bultmann, "ΠΕΛΘΩ," in Rudolf Kittel (ed.) Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), VI, p. 2.

description of the apostle's mission and method. It could accurately describe the intent, activity and response to preaching. At the same time, there is no question of Paul's confidence in the Gospel as the power by which men are saved or of the impotence of man's wisdom and rhetoric apart from it. Davis is right in affirming support for the divine role, but wrong in failing to appreciate the support also given to the human role in Paul's view.

In summary, we have seen that American Lutheran homiletics equally affirms both the divine and human roles in preaching. In addition, it sees persuasion specifically as a function of both roles. This tradition stands at the center point in the polarity of preaching.

THE SACRAMENTAL RELATION

We come now to the central issue of this study. If American Lutheran homiletics stands at the center point, how does it relate the divine and human roles in preaching? While it would accept the ingredients which make up Hall's critical integration, a theological base for the integration itself must still be found. The incarnational model suggested by Fant would seem to provide an analogical base. But is this analogy appropriately applied to preaching? Can more adequate theological grounding be found? We will examine two alternative principles, reject one and affirm the other.

1. The Incarnational Principle

The homileticians we are studying have seldom addressed themselves directly to a systematic discussion of this question. Their working assumptions are based on theological formulations which are characteristic of Lutheran thought. Wingren has written a theology of preaching which can be our starting point. We will look first at his description of the divine-human relation and then critique the theological grounding he gives it.

The very existence of a polarity in the divine-human relation is evidence of mistaken thought. Wingren contends that such a separation is not found in the Bible. Its origin is in Greek philosophy, where matter and spirit were placed in opposition to each other. This dualism was imported into Christian theology. It found expression in the Thomistic tradition and passed from there to Calvin and other Reformed theologians. Luther stood outside this tradition because he was determined to draw his whole theology from Scripture, which also stood outside it.¹¹⁹ In the Bible, and therefore in Luther, no separation between sacred and profane is found. God and man belong together.¹²⁰

When God and man are set against each other, theology gets into trouble. Either it becomes man-centered, as happened in humanistic liberalism, or it becomes God-centered in the way demonstrated in

¹¹⁹Gustaf Wingren, The Living Word (Philadelphia:Fortress Press, 1960), p. 205.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 180.

Barth. In either case, God and man remain opposed to each other.¹²¹

This is why Barth comes under Lutheran criticism. He seeks *"to make God holier and more divine by setting him in opposition to man."*¹²²

God's majesty is thought to be protected by his distance from humanity.

The reason why Lutherans can affirm God's role in preaching as strongly as Barth, without negating man's role as he must do, is precisely because they do not find God and man opposed. They find God's majesty specifically located in his humble identification with humanity, lying in a manger and hanging on a cross.¹²³ The Godliness of God is fathomless precisely because of His relation to the creaturely.

God's self-communication in the Word is always found in connection with a human form or element and never apart from it. Wingren writes:

*It is misleading to try and cut away the human element so as to arrive at a point where the Word is entirely divine, without any human admixture. Such an effort implies that God can be found and praised beyond the human sphere, whereas, as Luther says, the true God lies in the straw of the manger. From human mouths are heard the voice and tones of God, 'not the voice that speaks from heaven above, but that which is down in the midst of men.'*¹²⁴

This point applies equally to the Bible and to preaching. Any attempt to separate the human word from God's Word is to forfeit the greatness of God. *"It is in the simple words, in what is human in the Bible, that God's power is hidden; divine and human must not be separated."*¹²⁵

The theological basis for this divine-human togetherness is

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 31. ¹²² Ibid., p. 205. ¹²³ Ibid., p. 206.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 27. ¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

found in the incarnation. When Wingren applies this point to preaching, he is carried into the distinctively Lutheran doctrine, the communicatio idiomatum. He insists that the Lutheran view of preaching can *"only be understood in the light of belief in God's becoming man in Christ,"* which is dogmatically expressed in this particular Christological formulation.¹²⁶

This doctrine arose at the time of the Reformation in reaction to Reformed attempts: *"to make a gulf between the divine and human."*¹²⁷ Its aim was to express and maintain the unity between the divine-human natures of Christ. It asserts *"a 'sharing' of the attributes of Christ's divinity with those of his humanity, and a corresponding sharing of the attributes of his humanity with those of his divinity."*¹²⁸ It is Wingren's position that *"the reality"* expressed in this doctrine applies not only to Christology, but to all theology, including the theology of preaching.¹²⁹

Lehmann also finds the relation of the divine-human role in preaching grounded in the incarnation. He poses the question: *"how can the God whom heaven and earth cannot contain speak to men in the language of men?"*¹³⁰ He rejects the *"magic solution"* on the right and the *"psychological solution"* on the left. Then he writes: *"We believe*

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 31. ¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 204.

¹²⁸ Ibid. ¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 205.

¹³⁰ H. T. Lehmann, Heralds of the Gospel (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), p. 15.

*that the solution lies not so much in explaining as describing a mystery---the paradox of the incarnation."*¹³¹ While he recognizes that the incarnation is a unique event in history "*without parallel . . . without analogy,*" he insists that we must "*nevertheless . . . affirm that Christocentric proclamation is a continuation of that event in history. This is true because God continues to give us his message in our language.*"¹³²

At this point we must question the validity of applying the incarnational principle to preaching. What Fant uses as a model, Lehmann and Wingren affirm as a reality. Their discussion raises problems which must be faced.

The first problem is raised by the use of the communicatio idiomatum formulation. Many Lutheran theologians have trouble with it as a Christological formulation. Erling reviews the objections of Edmund Schlunk, Paul Althaus and Regin Prenter. Erling himself questions the validity of two pre-suppositions on which the formulation rests. While he finds value in preserving "*the unity of the person of Christ, both during his earthly ministry and as our risen Lord*"¹³³ a re-examination of this doctrinal formulation is needed in our day.

Thielicke also questions the success of any attempt to articulate the relation of Christ's two natures. He writes:

¹³¹Ibid., p. 22. ¹³²Ibid., p. 25.

¹³³Bernard Erling, "Communicatio Idiomatum Re-examined," Dialog, II (Spring 1963), 144.

. . . If there is anything in the history of Christianity that bears witness to this inaccessibility of God, it is the failure of every form of the doctrine of the 'two natures' which attempts to 'think together' the divine and the human natures in one system of thought.¹³⁴

He prefers to speak of the "two-sided character of the reality of God---this nearness and this 'total otherness,'" and express their relation "by an interplay of statements which correct each other."¹³⁵

There is a second problem with Wingren's formulation. Directly applying the principle of the incarnation intself to anything other than Christ himself is theologically impossible. Fant was aware of this, and therefore used it only as a model. Had more than that been claimed, he would have been open to the charge of "pseudo-incarnational thinking."¹³⁶ Braaten strongly questions the frequent extension of the incarnational principle to explain every Christian paradox. Quite properly he insists: "The being of God in Christ is a unique, unrepeatable event which cannot be extended as a principle in every direction."¹³⁷

This extension can be made to neither the church nor the Bible. To speak of the divine-human nature of the church is "totally foreign to the tradition of Lutheran theology."¹³⁸ If this is done to assert that the church is the creation of God, the vehicle of His

¹³⁴Thielicke, p. 30. ¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Carl E. Braaten, "Pseudo-Incarnational Thinking," Dialog, III (Winter 1964), 62.

¹³⁷Ibid. ¹³⁸Ibid.

mission in the world, the intent is laudable but the means is wrong. It is precisely because the church is God's creation that it does not share His nature. *"The creature is not divine, nor does it become divinized. . ."*¹³⁹ We should not even speak symbolically of the divine nature of the church unless we want finally to affirm papal infallibility. For that is where it leads.

In order to insure the humanity of the Bible, the incarnational principle is often used to speak of the divine-human nature of Scripture. Again, the intent is approved, but the means denied. *"God does not transfer his essential nature to the Bible. Such misuse of the principle of the incarnation makes the Bible into a 'second Christ' and leads to idolatry."*¹⁴⁰

In the light of these problems, we affirm Wingren's description of the Lutheran position that divine and human belong together, but we cannot follow him in using either the communicatio idiomatum specifically or the incarnational principle generally as a theological grounding for that togetherness in preaching. These doctrines refer to the relation of the divine-human natures in Christ. As such they are valid. But we are not looking for the relation of two natures in a person. We are looking for the relation of two roles in an activity---preaching. While the incarnational principle is a unique instance of the divine-human togetherness in a person, it does not apply to the instance we are examining. We cannot even use it as a model,

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* ¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

for we are working on a different building. The most it can do for our purpose is to serve as a beautiful harmony line to a melody for which we seek another harmony line.

If the incarnational principle will not do, where can we find a theological grounding for the divine-human roles in preaching?

Braaten suggests a lead which we will follow:

A clue that is still helpful to this end is Luther's use of the prepositions, 'in, with and under.' Both church and Bible are creaturely; they are created by God to accomplish his purpose. God uses thoroughly human and creaturely phenomena in, with and under which he mediates himself to the world. He does not need to lend them his divine nature to make them useful. Only God is divine.¹⁴¹

This series of prepositions is used by Luther to describe the relation of Christ's body and blood to the bread and wine in Holy Communion.¹⁴² It is the thesis of this paper that the divine and human roles in preaching find their relation in this sacramental principle.

2. The Sacramental Principle

The togetherness of God and the creaturely, as emphasized by Wingren, is a hub for Lutheran thought when considering the divine-human relations of varying spokes in the wheel of theology. Because of this togetherness, God's self-communication is always associated with

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Theodore G. Tappert (ed.), Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), Luther's Small Catechism.

an earthly or human element. This is often expressed by the concept of God's hiddenness. As Heinecken states it:

*. . . the transcendent, unseen, and unseeable God, who, in this sense at least is 'wholly other,' never did and never can appear to man directly so that he can be apprehended with the senses . . . When God appears, therefore, he is always hidden and is discerned only in faith.*¹⁴³

One instance of this hiddenness is found in general revelation, where God hides himself behind what Luther called the "masks" of creation. The unique instance is found in special revelation, where God's presence is hidden through incarnation in the humanity of Jesus.

Media of God. Harmonizing with these foundational instances is God's continuing communication of himself to man through media appropriate to human reception. These media, in Lutheran terminology, are "*the Word and sacraments.*" The Augsburg Confession says:

*For through the Word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the Gospel.*¹⁴⁴

For the sake of clarity, we should note that these "*instruments*" are complementary, not competitive means. Prenter insists that any opposition between Word and sacrament is foreign to Luther's thought. "*Word and sacrament are together the single means of grace*

¹⁴³Martin J. Heinecken, "Bultmann's Theology and the Message of the Preacher," Lutheran Quarterly, VI (November 1954), 286.

¹⁴⁴Tappert, p. 31, Augsburg Confession, Article V.

we have heretofore called the Word."¹⁴⁵ Lazareth agrees with this. He suggests that the Word, which Luther defined as *"the gospel of God concerning Christ"* is mediated through *"sermon and sacrament"* and that is what Lutherans actually mean by the traditional phrase. God communicates himself and his grace through the media of *"a sacramental Word"* and *"a verbal sacrament."*¹⁴⁶ Brand supports and clarifies this formulation when he says: *"Thus it would be more accurate and less misleading to speak of 'the Word in sermon and sacrament' . . . especially if one is a Lutheran theologian."*¹⁴⁷

Lutherans express the relation between God's Word and the means of its communication by distinguishing an *"inner Word"* from an *"outer word."* The *"inner word"* is God's Word of self-disclosure. The *"outer word"* is found in a variety of codes, each with its own purpose. Normally these codes are identified by the words written, spoken, and visible.

The written code is found in Scripture. Here God's Word is hidden in human words. Saarnivaara says Scripture is the *"revelation-word"* which functions as the norm and standard by which all Christian faith, teaching and life are judged. The other codes are *"the means-of-grace-word"* through which God forgives sin, works faith, and

¹⁴⁵Regin Prenter, "Luther on Word and Sacrament," in Word and Spirit (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1965), 126, 132.

¹⁴⁶William H. Lazareth, "Sacraments of the Word in Luther," Lutheran Quarterly XII:4 (1960), 315.

¹⁴⁷Eugene L. Brand, Baptism (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), p. 345.

imparts His Spirit.¹⁴⁸

The spoken code, which refers primarily to preaching, is the predominant means of God's self-communication with man. Kantonen expresses Luther's position in this way, *"The positive task of presenting Christ and awakening faith belongs primarily to the oral word . . . The living Word requires its own dynamic medium, the living voice."*¹⁴⁹

The visible code is the sacrament. While the oral word is primary, the visible word is of no less value. They are simply two different means of achieving the same end. Metzger explains the difference in this way:

*The sacrament presents the gift in a different way because man is intended to experience the goodness of God in soul and body, with his heart and his mouth. He is God's poor man, full of doubt, despair, and temptation. Therefore God comes to meet him right here in order to redeem him.*¹⁵⁰

Because man perceives by means of his five senses, Luther emphasized the need for some outward sign to accompany the medium of words. Preaching provides the words, the sacraments provide the signs. Through both these means, God communicates with man through all the normal sensory channels. Lazareth clarifies this when he writes, *"The sign as such is neither the container of God's grace nor merely a symbol of that grace. It is rather the medium through which God reveals himself to his people."*¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸Uuraas Saarnivaara, "Written and Spoken Word," Lutheran Quarterly 11 (May 1950), 174.

¹⁴⁹T. A. Kantonen, Resurgence of the Gospel (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1948), p. 122.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 303. ¹⁵¹Lazareth, p. 321.

Divine-Human Relation. On the basis of this description of the codes and purposes of the "outer word," we are now able to describe the distinctively Lutheran way of relating it with the "inner word." Because God and creation do not stand in opposition, He is able to hide Himself within the creaturely and use its own nature as a vehicle for divine disclosure. Indeed, God never reveals Himself or communicates with man in any other way. Luther stated this clearly in the Smalcald Articles:

*Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and Sacrament is of the devil.*¹⁵²

This principle of God's working only through the "outer" modes applies quite literally to the human senses and the material elements. The Holy Spirit does not perform the divine role in preaching except through the human process of speaking and hearing. Luther said:

*The oral (outward) word must before anything else be present and grasped with the ears if the Holy Spirit is to come into the heart, who enlightens us through the Word and works of faith.*¹⁵³

The same emphasis on God's communication through human sensory channels is made in connection with the Sacraments. Melancthon writes:

As the Word enters through the ears to strike the heart, so the rite (sacrament) itself enters through the eyes to move the heart. The Word and the rite have the same effect, as Augustine

¹⁵²Tappert, p. 313, Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII.

¹⁵³Quoted in Saarnivaara, p. 166 from Church Postil, 19th Sunday after Trinity.

*said so well when he called the sacrament 'the visible Word,' for the rite is received by the eye and is a sort of picture of the Word, signifying the same thing as the Word. Therefore, both have the same effect.*¹⁵⁴

Any suggestion that God speaks to man in isolation from these outer human and material means is foreign to Lutheran thought. God hides in and communicates himself through human words, water, bread and wine. Saarnivaara shows how Luther insisted that forgiveness is found in no other place. If it is sought there, it will be found. If it is sought elsewhere, it will not be found. *"Let, therefore, every man seek the forgiveness of sins from men, and from nowhere else."*¹⁵⁵ As Luther emphasized again the Smalcald Articles:

*In these matters, which concern the external, spoken Word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with the external Word which comes before.*¹⁵⁶

It is from this characteristic of Lutheran thought that American Lutheran homileticians see the relation of the divine and human roles in preaching. Though seldom systematically discussed, their ability to affirm both the divine and human roles in preaching rises from this theological ground.

Kildegard says, *"The Word of God always makes use of human forms as a means."*¹⁵⁷ He compares the relation of the *"objective,*

¹⁵⁴Tappert, p. 211, Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII.

¹⁵⁵Luther, House Postil, 19th Sunday after Trinity, quoted in Saarnivaara, 167.

¹⁵⁶Tappert, p. 312, Smalcald Article, Part III, Art. VIII.

¹⁵⁷Axel C. Kildegard, "Preaching to a Secularized Society," Lutheran Quarterly VI (February 1954), 6.

living gospel" and *"the subjective witness"* of the preacher to the relation of the church as *"bride of Christ"* and *"human organization."*

Then he says,

*The latter is the only carrier of the former that this world will ever know, and yet the two must be carefully distinguished. Even so, the Word of God comes through the human word, and yet a distinction must also be made between them!*¹⁵⁸

The distinction must be made because the human word does not take on the nature of the divine Word in any kind of transubstantiation. This distinguishes Lutherans from Catholics and makes the principle of incarnation unuseable for our purpose. On the other hand, precisely in this human word the Divine Word is found, and not in separation from it. This distinguishes Lutheran from Reformed thought, where God is often believed to speak through spiritual rather than earthly means. Heinecken summarizes Lutheran thought in relation to the media of the Word when he says:

*Here, too, is the 'hidden God' and the full scandal of the manger and the swaddling clothes: God present and active, not alongside of, not before or after, not in identity with, but 'in, with and under' the humble earthen vessels.*¹⁵⁹

The phrase *"in, with and under"* is the theological formula Lutherans use to articulate the relation of the divine presence to its creaturely media. This is termed a sacramental principle because it was developed as a way to express the relation of Christ's body and blood to the bread and wine in Holy Communion. These two are joined

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁵⁹Heinecken, "The Primacy of the Word," p. 23.

in what is called "*a sacramental union*" which affirms the presence of both divine and earthly realities without denying the nature of either.

Beyond the "*in, with and under*" formula and the "*sacramental union*" language, Lutherans do not attempt to explain the relation. They simply confess their inability to comprehend a mystery by human sense or reason.

*Here we take our intellect captive in obedience to Christ, as we do in other articles also, and accept this mystery in no other way than by faith and as it is revealed in the Word.*¹⁶⁰

Sacramental Rhetoric. Now we must turn and examine the homiletical literature to see the way in which preaching is sacramentally viewed in it. Our thesis is that the Word of God relates to the words of man in preaching by means of this same *sacramental union*. While this view is not often systematically stated in the literature we have examined, it is strongly implied or assumed. Scherer, for example, speaks of the "*sacrament of preaching*"¹⁶¹ and "*the sacrament of speech*."¹⁶² Marty describes preaching as "*a sacrament of sound waves*."¹⁶³ Even though Lehmann formally ties the divine-human relation in preaching to the incarnational principle, as noted above, he expresses the

¹⁶⁰Tappert, p. 486, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Article VII.

¹⁶¹Paul Scherer. For We Have This Treasure (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. ix.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁶³Martin E. Marty. A Second Chance for American Protestants (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 159.

sacramental principle most fully when he writes:

*In, with and under the frailty and weakness of the proclamation of the herald, the Holy Spirit is at work calling me to repentance, enlightening the mind, effecting and confirming faith in Jesus as my Lord.*¹⁶⁴

Caemmerer considers it "an accident of the Reformation" that the revision of the seven sacraments left the church with two "of which preaching was not one." He argues that preaching meets all the qualifications of a sacrament: ". . . its institution, for example, in Luke 24:44-48. Its grace: forgiveness of sins . . . Its tangible medium: preacher and listening people . . ."¹⁶⁵

Some contend that Luther viewed preaching in this way. Pelikan thinks it probable that "Luther made the proclamation of the Word a Sacrament alongside the other Sacraments." As the Lord's Supper was "the visible Word of God," so preaching was "the audible Sacrament." In this way, preaching and sacrament were seen to be co-ordinate. Just as the Word of God was first God's deed and then proclamation of that deed, so also the media which proclaim the deed, ". . . whether those media were audible, legible, or visible---belonged together."¹⁶⁶

A compact and comprehensive application of the sacramental view of preaching has been prepared by Starenko. Agreeing with

¹⁶⁴Lehmann, p. 11.

¹⁶⁵Richard R. Caemmerer, "The Pendulum of Preaching," Lutheran Quarterly, XX (November 1968), 338.

¹⁶⁶Jaroslav J. Pelikan, in Luther, Works (St. Louis:Concordia, 1959), Companion Vol., pp. 220-221.

Caemmerer that preaching meets the necessary qualifications,¹⁶⁷ he imagines how Luther, "if he had been minded to do so," might have described preaching by adding a Seventh Chief Part to the Small Catechism. We include the whole piece below as a demonstration of the way American Lutheran homiletics can relate the divine and human roles in preaching on the basis of the sacramental principle.

*THE SEVENTH CHIEF PART
The Sacrament of Preaching*

*In the plain form in which the head of the
family shall teach it to his household*

What is the Sacrament of Preaching?

Answer: Instituted by Christ Himself, it is the true life and forgiveness of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the form of spoken words, given to us Christians to hear and to share. Preaching is not merely words, but it is words used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.

What is this Word of God?

Answer: As recorded in Luke 24:46-47, our Lord Christ said: "It is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

What gifts or benefits does Preaching bestow?

Answer: It effects forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and grants eternal salvation to all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare.

What is this Word and promise of God?

Answer: As recorded in John 5:24, our Lord Christ said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My Word and believes Him who

¹⁶⁷Ronald M. Starenko, "Preaching and Liturgical Life," Concordia Theological Monthly, XL (October 1969), 595-596.

sent Me has eternal life; he does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life.

How can words produce such great effects?

Answer: *It is not the words that produce these effects but the Word of God connected with the words and our faith that relies on the Word of God connected with the words. For without the Word of God the words are merely words and no Preaching. But when connected with the Word of God it is a Preaching, that is, a gracious reconciling word, as St. Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 5:19. Furthermore, when connected with the Word of God, words become a Preaching, living word, as St. Paul also declares, 'And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers.' (1 Thess. 2:13)*¹⁶⁸

The value of adopting the sacramental principle in place of the incarnational principle is that the danger of claiming a divine nature for preaching is avoided. We affirm both the divine and human role fully without either separation or confusion. Since preaching and sacrament are coordinate media for divine self-disclosure, the theological formula which grounds the divine-human relation in one also belongs properly to the other. In preaching, God speaks His Word "*in, with and under*" the human words.

EVALUATION

Through the Sacramental Principle, the polarity of preaching is dissolved. It is no longer a question of how two opposing realities can be held together. If God and man belong together, the polarity of

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 596-597.

competition is replaced by the harmony of coordination. Under the sacramental principle the nature of preaching involves coordinate roles, not opposite poles.

This brings us to the question of persuasion. Does the coordination of divine-human roles apply to persuasion in preaching? We have already affirmed, on the basis of the Augsburg Confession and American Lutheran homiletics, that only God can persuade man to repent. Alone, man's finest persuasive effort cannot produce faith and life in Christ. But the sacramental principle says that God does not communicate with man apart from natural means, perceivable through the senses. Does he then either instruct or persuade men apart from the human processes of teaching and rhetoric?

Barrett contends that *"the form of preaching is exposition, just as the forms of the gospel sacraments are water, and bread and wine."*¹⁶⁹ He allows that God is, ". . . quite capable of using, when he pleases, thoroughly bad exposition and exegesis as well as good---yea, exposition which is not exposition can God choose and use when he sees fit."¹⁷⁰ But does God "choose" or "see fit" to use "exposition which is not exposition" to expose His Word? The sacramental principle suggests that He does not, for He achieves His ends through natural and human means which are appropriate to them.

God's role is neither to correct the preacher's exegesis nor clarify his exposition of the Word. He will reveal only as much of

¹⁶⁹C. K. Barrett. Biblical Problems and Biblical Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 30.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

Himself through them as the means themselves permit. Water may leak through clogged pipes, but it does not run. This is really Barrett's main point: *"You can no more have a sermon without exposition than baptism without water, or the Lord's Supper without bread and wine."*¹⁷¹ But the point is really stronger than that. Just as you cannot have the activity of sermon, baptism or communion without the means, neither can you have the divine-role fulfilled apart from the coordinate human role.

Here, of course, Barrett is discussing form in terms of content. We support that and will examine it in the next chapter. But as Davis emphasizes, form also relates to purpose.¹⁷² Does God use forms of media other than those which harmonize with His purpose? If the purpose of a sermon is to teach, does God instruct His people apart from human processes of learning? If the purpose of a sermon is to effect change in thought and action, does God work that change through processes other than those by which humans are otherwise persuaded?

Certainly we will agree that God can and does instruct and persuade both apart from and in spite of the human expression of any given sermon. But the sacramental principle says that when He does that, He still uses natural media. He simply uses media other than that particular sermon. God chooses not to instruct through non-instructional means. God chooses not to persuade except through persuasive means. The supernatural works through the natural. That's

¹⁷¹ Ibid. ¹⁷² Davis, p. 98.

why Lenski can tie the effectiveness of preaching to the use of "psychological norms"¹⁷³ and Caemmerer can insist on obedience to the laws of learning.¹⁷⁴

Experience, as well as theology, provides support for this position. Scherer tells of the preacher who prepared the first half of his sermons carefully and left the last half to the work of the Spirit spontaneously performed in the pulpit. After sharing his method with a curious parishioner, the preacher was told, "*Sir, I congratulate you indeed! Your half is unfailingly better than God's!*"¹⁷⁵

It is common to accept and observe this principle at work in many areas of life. We affirm sincerely that "*only God can make a tree.*" Yet we readily admit at the same time that God limits his tree-making activity to those ecological factors in nature which foresters can learn and apply. The better the forester conforms his activity to nature, the more trees God makes. And if the forester violates the natural processes, God does not make any trees through his labor at all. Surely God makes trees apart from and in spite of the forester, but even then he uses media cooperative with natural processes.

We hardly need to spell this out in its application to such fields as medicine, psychology and parenthood. Only God can produce a person who is healthy and whole. But He never does it apart from

¹⁷³cf. p. 150 of this paper.

¹⁷⁴cf. p. 151 of this paper.

¹⁷⁵Scherer, For We Have This Treasure, p. 178.

natural media appropriate to the given purpose. He did it once, if the virgin birth retains any meaning, but that is why the incarnational principle does not apply to preaching.

The point here is that rhetoric is the means by which God achieves the communication of His persuasive Word in preaching. Only as preachers learn and harmonize with the processes by which men are persuaded in this world will God use their speech as His means toward that end.

Hoh has expressed the coordination of divine-human activity clearly. After describing the results of true preaching, he writes:

*The whole transaction is divine, though the divine transaction, so far as we can see, would not take place were it not for the fact that a human transaction is taking place contemporaneously, simultaneously . . . There would be no Christian preaching were it not for the divine in it; but the divine in it would not reach lives were it not for human agents who in response to divine initiative offer themselves to proclaim, and unfold, and testify to, the truth that God Himself has revealed to them.*¹⁷⁶

The coordination of the divine-human roles in preaching, as grounded in the sacramental principle, is both the comfort and burden of the preacher. He is comforted by the assurance that the fulfillment of the purpose of preaching is God's work not his. He is only the means to that end. But the preacher who lies down to rest on the pillow of that comfort will find himself facing temptation. *"If you are the spokesman of God, cast your words down carelessly from the pinnacle of His temple, for has not God said, 'My Word shall not*

¹⁷⁶Paul J. Hoh, "A Definition of Preaching," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (April 1944), 171.

return unto me void?'" To that demonic persuasion there can never be any answer other than the one Jesus gave: *"It is written, 'you shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"* (Matt. 4:7)

This then is also the burden of the preacher. If he is to be God's means to God's end, then he must be a means to that end and not some other. For God does not speak His Word except through human speech. God does not teach His truth, except through human instruction. God does not influence people to change their beliefs and actions except through the process of human persuasion.

Oh the burden of preaching! How much simpler just to read 'holy Bibles'! How persuasive dare a man be? When does he overstep the line of robbing a man of the power of decision? When does he neglect the tool that has been given him and place false reliance upon the Holy Spirit? How many of the many 'props' available today may a man use to 'sell' his line? How much appeal may he make to man's selfishness and concern for the salvation of his soul? Is he not rather to free a man from such selfish concern by making him 'certain' of God's love and thus freeing him for a true concern for the neighbor? Oh the burden of preaching, to struggle to say the right thing in the right way and thus really to proclaim the Word of God and not one's own, without ever having any real guarantee that it is God's Word! To be always on this hot-seat! This is part of the primacy of preaching and there is no escape from this burden.¹⁷⁷

In the nature of preaching as grounded in the sacramental principle, we have found the answer to the question of this study. Now we will examine how that answer is applied in the content and form of preaching within American Lutheran homiletics.

¹⁷⁷Martin J. Heineken, "The Primacy of the Word," Dialog, III (Winter 1964), 24.

Chapter 5

CONTENT AND FORM

If the conclusions of the two preceding chapters are correct, then we would expect the content and form of preaching to be specifically persuasive in character. For if the purpose, occasion and divine/human roles in preaching are all oriented to persuasion, the content and formulation of the message itself must be persuasive as well.

Both rhetoric and homiletics relate the content of a message to a form determined by its purpose. Smith's static model shows "The Speech Form"¹ as a necessary element in the communication process that is shaped in terms of purpose. Instructional and persuasive speeches each "*externalize in their own particular patterns of linguistic form.*"² Davis makes the same point in connection with preaching. Form relates to substance (content) in speech just as the organism relates to living tissue.³ He writes:

*The functional form of a sermon is the form that sermon takes to better accomplish the definite purpose for which it is preached. More correctly, it is that form which almost automatically results from the intention to accomplish a given purpose.*⁴

This chapter therefore will examine both the content and form

¹cf. Figure 2. ²cf. p. 18 of this paper.

³Henry Grady Davis, Design for Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), p. 1.

⁴Ibid., p. 99.

of Christian preaching, to see if they conform to the persuasive purpose, occasion and function as outlined above. It will divide into two sections, focusing on theological and rhetorical dimensions respectively.

THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

We will limit the discussion of content in two ways. First, it is limited to theological rather than biblical dimensions. This is done for two reasons. In the first place, theological dimensions are nothing more than a systematic reduction of biblical content to its most fundamental categories. In the second place, we have already stressed that Lutheran preaching is necessarily textual preaching⁵ with kerygma serving as the foundation upon which didache is built.⁶ It would not advance our purpose to elaborate on those themes.

Second, we will limit this discussion primarily to the work of two homileticians, Stuempfle and Caemmerer. The former has provided the only full discussion of this matter in the literature. The latter has also addressed himself to it systematically, though in a more limited way. Between them, the views others express through casual references are adequately represented.

⁵cf. p. 141 of this paper.

⁶cf. pp. 112-128 of this paper.

1. Content Categories

Stuempfle's study was prompted by the belief that *"whatever other elements are necessary in the Christian Sermon, there is a certain theological sub-structure which is indispensable."*⁷ His objective was twofold: to examine the usefulness of the classic Law/Gospel categories for preaching today and to see if Lutheran theology would also allow a place for preaching a call to obedience. He asked: *"Is the sermon legitimately concerned with tracing out the ethical consequences of justification and exhorting men toward their fulfillment?"*⁸

Based on his study of the Reformation heritage and contemporary discussion, Stuempfle affirms a three-fold theological sub-structure for preaching: law, gospel and call to obedience.⁹

Caemmerer identifies the sub-structure of preaching in a similar, but slightly different way. He writes:

*If preaching speaks the Word of God . . . it will always hold three things before the hearer: a plan that God has for him, God's judgment on his progress or failure in meeting the plan, and God's grace in Christ by which he is enabled to fulfill the plan.*¹⁰

This triad of plan, judgment and grace is translated into the terms goal, malady and means, throughout the book.

There is basic correlation between these two sets of terms.

⁷Herman Gustave Stuempfle, Jr., "Law and Gospel in Contemporary Lutheran Preaching" (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1971), pp. 4-5.

⁸Ibid., p. 10. ⁹Ibid., p. 265.

¹⁰Richard Caemmerer, Preaching for the Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), p. 15.

Law/Malady and Gospel/Mean are directly synonymous. Obedience/Goal are partially so. The order of this third element reverses in the two schemes, goal coming first in the one, obedience coming last in the other. We will return to evaluate this point later. For now, we will use Stuempfle's order and both sets of terms.

Law/Malady - Traditional Lutheran theology uses the term law in three ways. The civil use refers to "*a restraint upon human wickedness*"¹¹ exercised by worldly authority to curb mankind from total chaos. The theological use is the law's proper and central function. It refers to God's demand for an inner obedience from man which "*out of a pure heart joyfully and spontaneously*" loves both God and neighbor.¹² The third use of the law is the application of God's will to the life of the Christian. Stuempfle terms this third use, the "*call to obedience*." It is the second use, the theological and proper use of the law which is the first theological dimension in preaching.

The need for preaching law rises from man's sinful state. He neither senses God's demands upon his life nor his own inability to fulfill them. He is filled with a self-centeredness that is destructive and covers it with a self-righteousness that prevents him from seeing the decay at work within.

It is the purpose of the law to confront this monster of self-righteousness with full force and bring man to his knees. Stuempfle

¹¹Stuempfle, p. 21. ¹²Ibid., p. 24.

describes the law's goal in this way: *"It shocks men out of their complacency about their standing before God, holds before their eyes the horrifying sight of their sin and disobedience, and plunges them into despair."*¹³

The content of the law, in Lutheran usage, is not identified with any specific set of codes or prescriptions. Anything which *"attacks and accuses man in his self-sufficiency . . . anything which frightens and accuses 'the conscience,'"*¹⁴ from any source, that function as law. It is a general term, the nature of which is understood not by content but by *"its immediate effect upon sinful man."*¹⁵ Since an earthquake or a smile may arouse the conscience, they would be included in the content of the term. Forde insists: *"Nature and function are taken together. The nature of the law is that it terrifies."*¹⁶

Preaching law then means the fulfillment of that function, whatever the content may be. Stuempfle suggests two ways in which this may be done. On the one hand, the law may be used as *"a hammer."* It aims at the conscience, functions as an accusation and focuses on man's responsibility for his plight.

*The goal is to engage man's sense of moral responsibility and to awaken his recognition of culpability for the broken condition of his own life and that of his world . . . to bring men to feel the weight of blame for the fact that his existence is as it is is.*¹⁷

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁴ Gerhard O. Forde, The Law-Gospel Debate (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1969), p. 177.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 193. ¹⁷ Stuempfle, p. 39.

The second way to preach the law is by using it as "*a mirror of existence.*" Here the target is not man's conscience, but his consciousness of himself and his perilous situation. The function is not to accuse, but to expose the reality of man's alienation, doubt, anxiety, and despair. Its terms are descriptive, not judgmental. Its focus is not on man's responsibility, but on his inescapable fate. It awakens awareness of the inevitable consequences which flow from life's brokenness.

These two differing ways of preaching law are roads leading to the same destination. *"While their point of contact in man's life may differ, the ultimate goal to which they mean to lead him is the same."*¹⁸ It is this goal toward which the law works that we must see. For this is no sadistic exercise on the part of either God or the preacher.

The function law performs is not God's proper work but his alien work. As a doctor's proper work is healing, so God's proper work is salvation. But the doctor may have to cut before he can heal. So it is also with God. Law is the knife God uses in preparation for His healing purpose. Stuempfle explains:

*It is in this sense that the law has a part to play in justification. It does not itself justify; it can only condemn. But when we writhe beneath the burden of condemnation, the Law can be 'a most useful servant impelling us to Christ.' (Luther) It is the 'schoolmaster' who, by its whipping, drives us to Christ.*¹⁹

The Law therefore serves to surface for man his need of deliverance. Caemmerer describes man's need in terms of death, darkness,

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 45. ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

and blindness. The preacher must "*stir the hearer to recognize his plight and be willing to listen to the remedy*"²⁰ which the gospel offers. Luther described this function in vivid terms:

*. . . hunger is the best cook. As the dry earth thirsts for rain, so the Law makes the troubled heart thirst for Christ. To such hearts Christ tastes sweetest; to them He is joy, comfort, and life. Only then are Christ and his work understood correctly.*²¹

There are six criteria for preaching the Law today which Stuempfle lists as a result of his study. Combined and adapted to our purpose, they can be summarized in this sentence. The law should be preached in a way that confronts man with his own accountability for involvement in personal and social expressions of evil and brings to his consciousness the predicament caused by underlying pride and unbelief, not as an end in itself, but as the necessary means of preparation for truly hearing the gospel.²²

Gospel/Means - While the Law is God's alien work, done only as a necessary pre-requisite, the Gospel is God's proper work, and therefore also the preacher's. Stuempfle describes it this way:

*The Gospel is God's revelation of Himself as merciful Father rather than angry Judge, offering Himself freely to His children, not because they deserve His love but because they need it.*²³

²⁰Caemmerer, p. 25.

²¹Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians," in his Works (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), XXVI, 131.

²²cf. Stuempfle, pp. 46-49.

²³Ibid., p. 96.

This makes it clear that the primary purpose of the Gospel is to fulfill man's most central need. Theologically stated, the Gospel is the end of the law. Gospel is the good news of atonement accomplished by Christ on the cross. As Forde writes: "*Law is an existential power from which man cannot escape without a real deliverance in the present. Atonement is the actual end of the law through faith.*"²⁴ This atonement serves as the act of release for man "*in his actual historical need.*"²⁵ The gospel both "*announces and realizes the end of the old and the beginning of the new when it is heard in faith.*"²⁶

Gospel therefore relates to the law in the same way an answer relates to a question, a solution to a problem, a satisfaction to a need. Stuempfle expands on this when he says,

*It is possible to describe the gospel in terms of a series of antitheses to the characteristic features of the Law: Christ as against Moses, promise as against demand, comfort as against threat, gift as against duty, grace as against judgment, justification as against condemnation, forgiveness as against punishment, freedom as against bondage, joy as against terror, life as against death.*²⁷

Both Stuempfle and Caemmerer emphasize that it is the preacher's task to proclaim the gospel in specific relation to the function the law has performed. Stuempfle says the gospel can be viewed from a dual perspective which stands in reciprocal relation to the two-fold expression of the law.²⁸ Where the law has functioned as a "*hammer*"

²⁴Forde, p. 190. ²⁵Ibid., p. 189.

²⁶Ibid., p. 190. ²⁷Stuempfle, p. 96.

²⁸Ibid., p. 107.

of accusation pointing up the hearer's responsibility for his situation the Gospel is voiced in terms of forgiveness. Both of them focus on the conscience--*"first to stir it out of complacency into guilt and, then, to lead it to a place of security in grace."*²⁹

Where the law has functioned as a *"mirror,"* reflecting the conditions of existence in which the hearer is caught, the Gospel must be spoken as an antiphon. By antiphon he means *"a voice lifted in response to another voice. It is not an echo, but speaks with a content independent of, yet related to the voice it answers."*³⁰ The aspect of the human condition described by law will be *"answered"* by the gospel formed in corresponding terms. Stuenkel uses the following *"sets"* as representative of his meaning:³¹

<u>Law</u>		<u>Gospel</u>
1 - Alienation	-	Unification
2 - Anxiety	-	Certitude
3 - Despair	-	Hope

Caemmerer approaches the communication of the Gospel in exactly the same way. He writes:

*We have reviewed the importance of alerting the hearer to his need, a need toward God . . . The Scriptures are remarkable for the close relation which they effect between the modes for setting forth man's predicament and the methods of articulating the Gospel answer. That is a cue for the preacher's art.*³²

He terms these interrelated thoughts and pictures *"complexes of the Gospel"* and discusses such examples as *"Life for Death . . .*

²⁹Ibid., p. 113. ³⁰Ibid., p. 114.

³¹Ibid., p. 116. ³²Caemmerer, p. 29.

Covering for Sin . . . The Judgment of Mercy."³³ In Appendix III³⁴

he presents his own series of thirty-five complexes of Law and Gospel under four main headings, showing the variety of biblical images and thought forms in which correlations between "*Man's Problem (Law)*" and "*God's Answer (Gospel)*" can be constructed. In summary he writes:

*The complexes of the Gospel give the preacher the cue for his task, namely as spokesman for God to reach into the malady of man under God and hold its misery up for man's conviction, to bring the thrust of God's own act in Christ to bear upon it, and thus fit his hearer for the goals of God, the goals of faith and love.*³⁵

There are five criteria for preaching the Gospel today which Stuempfle lists as a result of his study. We combine and express them for our purposes in the following sentence. The Gospel should be preached as God's antiphon to the Law, focused in the person and work of Jesus, expressed in an idiom intelligible to contemporary man and addressed to the hearer as directly and personally as possible.³⁶

Obedience/Goal - The third element in the theological content of preaching is a center of confusion in terms of its nature, content, and purpose. The clearest expression comes from Caemmerer who speaks of God's "*goals*" for his people. In addition to law and gospel, the sermon is to articulate the specific goal to which their particular application is directed.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 30. ³⁴ *cf.* pp. 330-331.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31. ³⁶ Stuempfle, pp. 126-130.

As previously noted, there are goals of faith and life. Faith goals are preached *"to bring hearers who have not known Christ to faith in Him."*³⁷ Evangelistic preaching falls under this category. But so also does regular congregational preaching. For Christians *"need rich clear Gospel to lift them from the little to the larger faith, from self-righteousness to trust in God's mercy."*³⁸ While faith is produced by the actual preaching of the Gospel itself, exhortation to believe *"is announcing the goal which the Gospel will help to reach. Such exhorting and announcing is good indeed, provided that it signals: This is important; now get your help to do it."*³⁹ The preacher must never forget that this exhorting is not the means but the articulation of the goal. *"Faith for justification is both begun and preserved as the preacher speaks the Gospel of the Cross."*⁴⁰

Goals for life deal with the living out of the Gospel in Christian fruitfulness. This can be summarized under the term love, which functions in all the relations of life. Because of the Holy Spirit's presence in the Christian, the goals of Christian life can be preached with the strong imperatives, *"Do," "Live," "Love," Grow."* Being freed from the old nature, the Christian can be directed to expanding areas of performance. *"This means that the preacher can risk even the most trying area of guidance, that of helping men live the life of God in the 'natural' or 'secular' orders."*⁴¹ Such areas as

³⁷Caemmerer, p. 179. ³⁸Ibid., p. 180.

³⁹Ibid., p. 182. ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 179. ⁴¹Ibid., p. 189.

citizenship, marriage and business are among the spheres in which Christians can be called to live in harmony with God's will and by His power. *"The call of the Gospel summons and sustains men for a growing and fruitful life in Christ."*⁴² The goals are articulated by the preacher on the basis of the Word. The power comes from the Gospel.

These "life goals" in Caemmerer find a parallel in the third part of Stuempfle's "theological sub-structure." As noted previously, his "call to obedience," deals with "tracing out the ethical consequences of justification and exhorting men toward their fulfillment." Stuempfle's study sought to find theological support in the Lutheran tradition for including this element in preaching. He found that support in Luther, Thielicke, Althaus and Joest. It's fortunate that he did, for Stuempfle's fellow American Lutheran homiletics have been teaching students to preach this in one form or another consistently. It is what Reu called the second aspect of edification; what Lenski called Application; what Schneider meant by perfecting the church; what Davis included in both teaching and therapy.⁴³

While we cannot venture far into this question here, it should be noted that the point of struggle in Lutheran circles is not whether "the implications of justification" for Christian life can be included in sermons. The problem centers on the way that material is identified. The debate rages over the accuracy of using the term law to describe it. If law, for Lutherans, means the effect of terror in

⁴³cf. pp. 112-118 of this paper.

man's conscience, and if its content can include anything from earthquakes to the gospel, then how can instruction and exhortation for Christian living be termed Law? For exhortation does not have terror as its function.

Forde, in his definitive summary of this issue from the Lutheran perspective, absolutely insists that in Christ the law finds its end. The very situation where the *"third use of the law"* would apply (the life of faith) is exactly the situation from which law has been abolished. To apply the term law theologically after the reception of the gospel would involve *"drastic modification"* and *"tortuous re-definition."*⁴⁴ And that is exactly where the controversy centers: in the definitions of terms. What Stuenkel terms the call to obedience, Forde calls *"the admonitions of the gospel,"* insisting that *"little is gained by using the term law in that connection."*⁴⁵ He claims history provides little encouragement for using the term law in connection with *"a truly evangelical ethic."*⁴⁶

If a way could be found to describe this emphasis in preaching without using the term *"law"* in some sense, the theologians would be happy. If a way could be found to clearly use law in reference to content instead of function, the problem would be solved as well. Caemmerer's solution is to use the *"goal"* language which he specifically differentiates from law.

⁴⁴cf. Forde, p. 226 ff. for his discussion of this.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 226. ⁴⁶Ibid.

Describing the preaching of malady, he writes, "*Hence, the preacher preaches God's own indictments and warning. He preaches the Law. This is not to be confused with his outlining of God's plans and goals for this people.*"⁴⁷

It is exactly this "*truly evangelical ethic*," or these "*admonitions of the gospel*" that Stuenpfle means by his "*call to obedience*," and there has never been any question about the appropriateness of their expression in preaching in the literature we are examining. Indeed, as Caemmerer points out: "*Most of the themes of the Christian year, as set up in the traditional lessons, aim at the enabling of the Christian life.*"⁴⁸ That this is true can be seen from a glance at Motter's list of "*one sentence explanations*" of each text for each Sunday, meant to be shared with the congregation "*so that the mind of the worshipper is informed of the central idea or theme of the lesson before it is read.*"⁴⁹ Out of one-hundred and thirty passages, equally divided between Gospel and Epistle selections, fifty-two are described by the terms appeal, warning, challenge, call, exhort, plea, encourage, command, direction, etc., all in relation to the response the text seeks from Christians. Most of Motter's explanations don't in fact explain, but simply characterize the text as the record of an event,

⁴⁷Caemmerer, p. 25. ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 185.

⁴⁹Alton M. Motter, "Explanatory Sentences for the Lessons of the Church Year," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVIII (October 1945), 388.

(The transfiguration of Christ) or a form of teaching (The Parable of the Fig Tree). If the meaning of these had been expressed in a sentence, Caemmerer's claim would be even more strongly supported.

The very structure of the Church Year Lutherans follow shows the legitimacy of preaching on "*the ethical consequences of justification*." While the first half of the year centers on the elements of a strict kerygma, the other half specifically focuses on the Christian life, including its ethical dimensions. The Lutheran tradition should have no question about the inclusion of this material in preaching. It assigns it.

The actual practice of preaching in this church may well focus more on didache, however inadequately, than kerygma. Backus did a study of 206 Lutheran sermons preached between 1930 and 1950. He compared their contents to a list of eight themes he drew from the kerygma. The percentage of sermons in which these themes were either mentioned or developed are summarized below:⁵⁰

Atonement as the act of God	30%
Christ as fulfillment of Scripture	19%
Sin in relation to the listeners	45%
Cross in relation to the listeners	49%
Christ's death related to Man's sin	48%
Resurrection of Christ	17%
New Life through the Spirit's presence	28%
Means of Grace	29%

This would suggest that most of the emphasis is placed on man's responsibility rather than God's action. The question is not whether this

⁵⁰William Backus, "A Study of Contemporary Lutheran Preaching," Lutheran Quarterly, XIII (November 1961), 322-332.

material "has a place" but whether it is preached evangelically rather than moralistically and applied fully or only partially.

This is Stuempfle's concern too. Following Luther, he says the *"justified man needs guidance and encouragement in the living of the new life he has been granted in the gospel."*⁵¹ This includes not only his private and personal but also his public and social life.

Following Thielicke and Althaus, a contrast is drawn between what a Christian is by grace and what he is to be in thought and action.

*Looked at in one way, this new life is a spontaneous overflow of the 'is-ness' of the man in Christ; but from another standpoint, man as the creature and servant of God always--even as justified--stands under an 'ought' that is addressed to him by his Creator and Lord.*⁵²

This "ought" is always addressed to a Christian within the context of grace. It is not an isolated emphasis degenerating into moralism. But in that context, *"it attends to its task of ethical guidance."*⁵³

This element is to be preached specifically and concretely. It points to areas of life where a Christian's obedience is required and *"breaks up the will of God, which is to direct the believer's life, into more specific commands, so that its application to life can be more clearly seen."*⁵⁴ Adopting Thielicke's description of the law used in this way as a *"loving reminder,"* Stuempfle sees this emphasis

⁵¹Stuempfle, p. 207.

⁵²ibid. ⁵³ibid., p. 209. ⁵⁴ibid., p. 191.

in preaching as *"lovingly guiding"* forgiven people into an obedience *"ever more freely offered to God in an ever broadening range of life's tasks and relationships."*⁵⁵

As a result of his study, Stuempfle identifies four criteria for preaching the *"call to obedience"* which we combine for our purpose and summarize in one sentence. The call to obedience should be a significant note in preaching, sounded only as a consequence of grace, and applied concretely to the public as well as the private sectors of life.⁵⁶

2. Category Evaluation

In evaluating the substructure for preaching outlined above, there are two problems which need to be solved. First, there is the problem of naming and defining the content of the third element in the structure. That law and gospel are two of its elements is clear without comment. But can we accept the call to obedience as an accurate designation of the third element?

The obvious defect in this designation is that it cannot apply to all preaching, but only to preaching addressed to Christians as Christians. It has already been agreed that preaching is directed to non-Christians as well as Christians. Indeed, its first and basic aim is to proclaim the kerygma for the purpose of bringing

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 192. ⁵⁶ cf. Ibid., pp. 207-212.

non-Christians to faith and deepening the faith of the Christian. Does not this third element then need to be phrased in a way that includes this call to faith?

In his classification of preaching forms in the New Testament, Reicke identifies four forms.⁵⁷ The first two concern us here. The primary form was used for the purpose of conversion and included the elements of admonition and invitation. In both Old and New Testaments it was "*the first duty*" of the divine messenger to sound these two notes. In the New Testament, the greater stress was placed on invitation.

*Jesus generously invited people to enter the Kingdom while the Apostles and Christian missionaries invited them to enter the church. The latter form of invitation did not claim to be anything but a continuation of the former.*⁵⁸

The second function of these messengers was "*instruction and edification.*" This was addressed to those who had accepted the invitation. The content of these two forms often overlap and both dimensions belong to Christian preaching.⁵⁹ In later periods no sharp difference is made in material addressed to insiders and outsiders because insiders

*are also to remember their conversion, to recall the admonition delivered against their sins and to be thankful for the divine grace communicated to them at their baptism. These various forms of preaching are necessary because man is still living in the flesh.*⁶⁰

⁵⁷Bo Reicke, "A Synopsis of Early Christian Preaching," in Anton Fridrichsen and others, The Root of the Vine (Edinburgh: Neill, 1953), pp. 128-160.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 130. ⁵⁹Ibid., p. 133. ⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 143-144.

Since *"the essential purpose of New Testament preaching was invitation . . ."*⁶¹ and since that note must continue to be sounded among Christians along with *"admonition and edification,"* we cannot have a sub-structure which accents the secondary aim of preaching (obedience) and ignores its primary aim (faith).

Stuempfle would certainly agree with this. As previously noted, his study had the twin aim of testing the continuing validity of the law-gospel structure for preaching and justifying the inclusion of *"ethical guidance"* as subject matter for preaching. Having succeeded in both, he seems to have unconsciously attached the latter to the former without noting the serious omissions of *"a call to faith"* in doing so. The word obedience cannot be intended to include faith, since Stuempfle has defined it as *"ethical consequences."* If it is argued that a call to faith is implied in the gospel, then one wonders why the call to obedience is not equally implied in it. If one insists that the call to obedience be specifically identified as a part of the sub-structure of preaching, then surely the prior or more primary call to faith must be so identified as well.

This is the strength of Caemmerer's goal category. It identifies specifically what the implications of the gospel are not only to life, but also to faith. *"The first great goal that God has for His people is that they believe . . . This goal continues to shape preaching. . . also after the hearer comes to faith."*⁶² The second great

⁶¹Ibid., p. 136. ⁶²Caemmerer, p. 17.

goal, as previously noted, is summarized in the concept of love.

Preaching is to direct and empower that love. *"It helps men recognize and carry out the purpose for which God has placed them into the world, in the callings of family, business and community."*⁶³

If we are devising a single schematic sub-structure for preaching, it clearly must be comprehensive enough to include all the necessary elements of all preaching. If it leaves something out, it surely cannot leave out that which is primary in favor of that which is secondary. If law and gospel issue in a call, then it must be identified as a call to both faith and obedience.

The second problem has to do with the nature of these three sub-structural elements. Is it accurate to describe the call as a theological element comparable and equal to law and gospel? It would seem obvious that God's Word has only two theological categories into which it can be fundamentally classified. Stuempfle seems to sense this when he states the first conclusion of his study, affirming the continuing viability of the law/gospel categories. He says this study

*. . . strengthened the writer's conviction that they continue to provide a useful way of designating the fundamental content of preaching. The Christian message, no matter how the form in which it is cast in different times and places may vary, reaches men under the dual aspect of judgment and grace, demand and promise, description and prescription.*⁶⁴

This would seem to be saying that the fundamental content of the

⁶³Ibid., p. 18. ⁶⁴Stuempfle, p. 253.

Christian message and preaching is law and gospel. His second and third conclusions repeat only these two elements.⁶⁵ In his fourth conclusion he asserts the need for Lutherans not to "*mute the call to obedience*."⁶⁶ which is perfectly proper. In conclusion five, this call is designated, along with law and gospel as a "*dimension*."⁶⁷ Then in the sixth conclusion it is suddenly asserted that "*Law, Gospel and the call to obedience form the essential theological substructure of the sermon*."⁶⁸ Since this assertion is followed only by a discussion of the order of these elements in presentation, one wonders how "*the call to obedience*" became elevated to an equal status with law and gospel as "*the essential theological substructure*" of preaching.

While the "*ethical implications of the gospel*" are essential to preaching in general, they are certainly not essential to every sermon in the way law and gospel must be. Neither is this a theological category of equally fundamental rank. Luther makes this clear in his commentary to the Galatians. He speaks of "*the first step in Christianity*" as the preaching of repentance through law and "*the second step*" as the gospel and its offer of forgiveness.⁶⁹ There is no third step equal to these two.

The call to faith found in such biblical expressions as "*repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins*," is a part of the

⁶⁵cf. pp. 255 and 257. ⁶⁶cf. p. 260. ⁶⁷cf. p. 263.

⁶⁸cf. p. 265. ⁶⁹Luther, XXVI, 126.

kerygma itself. Reumann points this out clearly when he outlines the kerygma under four categories: theme, content, offer and invitation.⁷⁰

The articulation of a proper response to the gospel is a part of the gospel. It cannot be identified as a third theological element separate from and equal to the gospel.

The call to obedience found in such biblical expression as the golden rule or Paul's exhortation to work in order to give to those in need are either a third use of the law or admonitions of the gospel, depending on where one stands in the debate over definitions of those terms. In either case, they belong to the law or the gospel and do not compose any third category of theological content in a sense parallel to the other two elements.

The element of call is a part of the substructure of preaching, not in a theological but in a homiletical sense. This is the point where a sermon moves from the content of its message to the response sought from the hearers. It is an element of the message that rises from the purpose of the message. If the purpose were instruction, the message would only include the necessary law-gospel information. But since its purpose is persuasive, the message must include articulation of the response sought and an appeal to the hearers to perform it.

Mounce gives a three point outline of the kerygma, in which the third element is *"a summons to repent and receive forgiveness of*

⁷⁰ John H. P. Reumann, "The Kerygma and the Preacher," Dialog, III (Winter 1964), 27.

sins."⁷¹ Stott reduces the kerygma to two basic elements: the proclamation of Jesus as Savior and Lord and appeal. He finds it in the very nature of a herald to make this appeal. *"The herald does not just preach good news, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. No. The proclamation issues in an appeal. The herald expects a response."*⁷² Because of this coupling of proclamation and appeal, Stott insists that they belong together in preaching and that *"we must never make the proclamation without then issuing the appeal."*⁷³ Proclamation without appeal *"is not Biblical preaching. It is not enough to teach the gospel; we must urge men to embrace it."*⁷⁴

It is this appeal ingredient in the content and nature of preaching which makes the call an essential ingredient in the sub-structure of all sermons. It is the element that distinguishes preaching from teaching. Teaching also deals with law and gospel, but it does not appeal for response. The call then is not a third theological element but the homiletical element in the scheme.

In the light of these considerations, we affirm the sermonic sub-structure of law, gospel and call. All belong to the content of the message. The first two are necessary theological elements. The

⁷¹Robert H. Mounce, The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 16.

⁷²John R. W. Stott, The Preacher's Portrait (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), p. 35.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

last one is the necessary homiletical element which appeals for appropriate responses of faith or obedience.

On the basis of the material presented and discussed so far in this chapter, it is apparent that the content of preaching is persuasive in character. There is an exact correspondence between the persuasive pattern set forth in Part One and the substructure of preaching observed above.

Law has no other function in preaching than to motivate hearers. Stuenkel's discussion of hammer and mirror shows that both aim to awaken the cognitive consistency and existential needs of persons to the point where an answer or satisfaction is sought.

Gospel has no other function than to answer and satisfy those needs. The emphasis both Stuenkel and Caemmerer place on relating the gospel directly to the law in consistent and compatible "*sets*" or "*complexes*" is parallel to rhetoric's insistence that the message be associated in a way that enables hearers to perceive it as satisfaction for the need aroused.

The call to faith and obedience are nothing other than the direction a speaker gives, specifically spelling out the responses people are expected to make to the message. Just as the persuasion actually takes place in the "motivation-association" duality of rhetoric, so the preacher's goal is achieved in the "law-gospel" duality. What remains are the "*loving reminders*" or the words of "*guidance*" given to enable hearers to actuate what they have already been persuaded to believe or do.

This is why Caemmerer can speak of "*the basic persuasive theology*" that belongs to preaching.⁷⁵ For it is precisely persuasive in content. In this sense we can agree with Ritschl in saying that "*content is what matters; form and technique will grow out of the content, not vice versa.*"⁷⁶ But that leads us to a conclusion exactly opposite of his. For content that is persuasive in nature is necessarily persuasive in form.

RHETORICAL DIMENSIONS

We now turn to examine the area of rhetorical form. The presence and order of the substructural elements in preaching will be viewed first. Then the rhetorical pattern will be surveyed in terms of the homiletical literature.

1. Emphasis and Order

Since the elements discussed above form the essential substructure of preaching, it is not surprising to find both Stuempfle and Caemmerer proposing the presence of all three elements in every sermon. But Stuempfle does not insist on equal emphasis for all elements. His scheme is not intended to propose a "*symmetry of parts*" that would make

⁷⁵Caemmerer, p. 90.

⁷⁶cf. p. 99 of this paper

every sermon an *"equilateral triangle."* The element which is emphasized in a given sermon depends on two factors. The first is the text on which the sermon is based. When the accent of the text is on law, the sermon will place the emphasis there. The same is true of the other elements. But when one element receives primary emphasis, the other elements will not be absent. *"It is only that the sermon, in the interests of exegetical integrity, will be balanced toward that theological pole which is dominant in the text itself."*⁷⁷

The second factor is the context of time and persons to whom the sermon is to be delivered. Within the limits permitted by the text, the situation of the hearers will influence the comparative emphasis given to each element. While Stuempfle allows the possibility that one element may even be totally absent in a given instance, *"such a gap will not be normative."*⁷⁸

Caemmerer takes a stricter view on the balance required among these elements. Since he is concerned with persuasion as well as content, it is important that all dimensions be present to play their persuasive role. After the exegetical work is done, the preacher stands in danger of producing a biblical lecture. He must avoid this because *"His calling is to persuade people, to change them in the direction which God has in view for them. He himself must plan that persuasion."*⁷⁹

⁷⁷Stuempfle, p. 264. ⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Forde, p. 87.

To do this, the preacher must examine the meaning of the text for the elements of goal, malady and means. When the text does not supply ample emphasis on all three elements, the preacher must *"fill out the basic persuasive theology of the text"* from other parts of scripture. Since a given text is a part of a whole, its limitations must not be allowed to *"fence in the essential vitality of his message."* In doing this the sermon is not to become untextual, *"but it should not cease to be Biblical or persuasive or the good news."* The art of mating theology and homiletics reaches its finest expression in *"filling out the pattern of Gospel preaching."*⁸⁰

If all three elements are to be present in the sermon, how are they to be ordered? Will they always form a sequence moving from law to gospel to call? Stuempfle admits to a certain *"theological logic"* in following that plan. But he is aware that preaching is, *"in a sense,"* an *"art form"* which can shape itself in a variety of ways. Depending on the feature to be particularly emphasized and the development rising naturally from the text, these elements may find a variety of orders and even interpenetrate each other. This is particularly true in light of the fact that listeners may hear law in gospel, gospel in call and call in law.⁸¹

The same emphasis is found in Caemmerer's book. While there is a certain rhetorical logic in the goal, malady, means scheme, he

⁸⁰Caemmerer, pp. 90, 91.

⁸¹Stuempfle, pp. 266, 267.

does not mean to suggest it as a static outline. The message is to be formed primarily with the hearer in mind and should be organized with a sequence of ideas that *"fit the hearer's way of thinking."* But it must also be faithful to the text. The central thought and main divisions are to find their content in relation to the text and their form in relation to the hearer. The scheme would form the outline only in cases where the text has all three elements in it. But even then it is not necessarily wise, for it puts all the gospel into one section of the sermon. *"When the preacher can confront his hearers with Law and Gospel repeatedly in the same sermon without muddling his plan, then he is on the track of a good outline."*⁸²

In evaluating these views on the order of elements in a sermon there is both a theological and a rhetorical point to be stressed. As we have already noted, law operates as a function in Lutheran theology. Because of its function, it must stand in a particular order to the gospel. Forde states this explicitly when he says of the law: *"It designates the manner in which God confronts sinful man in judgment. This confrontation must always necessarily precede the gospel."*⁸³ This is why Lutherans resist the attempts of Barth and others to reverse the law/gospel order. As an existential category that describes man's condition, the function of law is at work first no matter what content may be offered.

⁸²Caemmerer, p. 96.

⁸³Forde, p. 178.

Stuempfle has noted that *"the preaching of the gospel itself can have the effect of law."* When a man hears of a Redeemer, that may speak to him of his bondage rather than his release. When he hears of a self-giving God, it can produce *"a sense of shame for his ingratitude and disobedience"* and consequently *"the proclamation of the Gospel can itself strike man's heart as Law."*⁸⁴

The reason this occurs is not discussed by Stuempfle. The gospel functions in this way only when law has not previously done its work. No gospel is heard as law unless the law has not been heard. Forde writes: *"Law will do its work first, prior to the gospel, regardless of what men may attempt to do with it in their theologies."*⁸⁵ Since law will function prior to the gospel no matter what content is placed first in a sermon, it is important that gospel follow law. For if the gospel is heard as law and the hearer is thereby ready to hear the gospel, there is no gospel left to hear. If the preacher has saved the law till last, it will not be heard as gospel.

While the effects of law and gospel are surely not under the preacher's control, nevertheless choices must be made regarding the organization of sermons. It is clearly best to follow the theological principle of law preceding gospel in preaching.

Rhetorically, we can make the same point in relation to all three elements in the substructure. Once we begin thinking of law,

⁸⁴Stuempfle, p. 28.

⁸⁵Forde, p. 179.

gospel and call as functional, rather than content elements, their order in a message is seen from a different perspective. While it is not mandatory that every sermon move systematically through the scheme, all three functions of need (law), satisfaction (gospel), and guidance (call) must happen for the purpose to be achieved.

This sequence of steps has been demonstrated to be most persuasive by speech research and therefore ought to be followed for maximum effectiveness in preaching. When this classic order of elements is changed, the preacher must take care to insure that their functions are not thereby short-circuited. If there is both theological and rhetorical logic in this order, one must shuffle it only with care, lest he call people to act on that which they neither yet believe nor think they need. It is for this reason that Stuenkel's schematic order is preferred to Caemmerer's, though either can be used to fulfill the functions. In any case, the law-gospel order should not be reversed. For as we have seen, this order is just as important rhetorically as theologically.⁸⁶

When the balance of elements is changed, the preacher should do so in full knowledge of the functions they are intended to perform. The balance may be affected significantly by the situation in which he is preaching. In some situations, the law function may be so strongly fulfilled by circumstances surrounding the occasion, that only a reference to it by way of introduction may be necessary. The burden

⁸⁶See pp. 64-66 of this paper.

of the message will be gospel-call. In other situations, the implications of the law-gospel elements may be so obvious that an extended development of the call would insult the congregation's intelligence. A simple reference to it by way of conclusion will do. In other situations, the call may be the main burden of the message. Then the preacher must be sure that the gospel function has been adequately enough fulfilled previously for the call to do its work.

2. Homiletics and Rhetoric

How much emphasis is given in American Lutheran homiletical literature to the rhetorical pattern outlined in Part One? From the sub-structural elements discussed above, it is apparent that both fields are concerned with the same elements. The amount of material correlated between them is so extensive that we will limit ourselves to a sampling. Our purpose is to demonstrate the correspondence.

Attention - The importance of attention in preaching is clearly evident in the literature. Henry Ward Beecher once prefaced a sermon by saying: *"If the sexton finds anyone asleep in my audience this morning, let him come up and wake me up."*⁸⁷ This suggests that gaining and maintaining attention is the responsibility of the preacher. Heineken considers it primary. *"The preacher's first task is*

⁸⁷Quoted in Winston Lamont Brembeck and William Smiley Howell, Persuasion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 263.

that of getting people's attention."⁸⁸

One method for doing this is suggested by Lenski. The preacher waits in the pulpit until all is quiet. Then he waits a little longer. *"All eyes will fix themselves on you--waiting; and like a magnetic current, which you can actually sense and feel, the attention of the audience will rise to meet you."*⁸⁹ Preachers have the asset of their hearer's attention to begin with, according to Lenski. The introduction does not need to be devoted to *"attention and interest"* because, by following the counsel above, *"we have both without effort."*⁹⁰ Davis thinks along these same lines. People come to church wanting to hear. The *"greatest peril is that attention and interest are too easy to win from the people who come to church."*⁹¹ The preacher need not concern himself about attention so long as he *"has a thing worth saying and says it well."*⁹²

All other homiletical writers emphasize the opposite point. Caemmerer is fearful of the attitude which says: *"God's Word is always powerful. Just to speak it means that it will do its work."*⁹³ This may result in a concentration on making the sermon true and correct, *"but not necessarily interesting."* That, in turn, affects the

⁸⁸Martin J. Heineken, "Bultmann's Theology and the Message of the Preacher," Lutheran Quarterly, VI (November 1954), 283.

⁸⁹R. C. H. Lenski, The Sermon (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern), p. 292.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 293. ⁹¹Davis, p. 187. ⁹²*Ibid.*

⁹³Caemmerer, p. 41.

congregation. *"These hearers will concentrate on being present, orderly and decorous, but not necessarily attentive."*⁹⁴

When experienced preachers mislead younger men with the counsel, *"Your sermons don't have to be interesting,"* Scherer loses all patience. Preaching's failure to be heard cannot always be blamed *"on the everlasting perversity of human nature."* Much of the problem stems from *"the plain fact"* that preachers have not done the hard work that it takes *"to hold human eyes and human ears to anything anywhere."* It is not just a matter of having something worthy to say. *"To fasten a man's attention and challenge his respect is not done lightly, no matter how worthy your material or how exalted your theme."* It is a matter of deliberate effort and work. For God's truth always *"gets only the hearing we can win for it."*⁹⁵

The primary way to hold attention is through interest. Reu claims that: *"Attention or interest . . . is the essential pre-condition without which the soul cannot be influenced. Hence, the awakening of interest is one of the primary duties of the preacher who wishes to edify."*⁹⁶ Interest is the key because that which interests a person begins to have value for him, awakens pleasurable emotions in his soul and a longing to possess the object of interest. A living relation grows between a person and that which interests him. Consequently, the emotions, the intellect and the will are all moved to

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ M. Reu, Homiletics (Chicago: Wartburg, 1927), p. 124.

reach out for the object and examine it for the purpose of deciding whether to accept or reject it. *"To awaken such an interest on the part of his hearers in the subject-matter of his sermon, must be the aim of the preacher."*⁹⁷ There is no way a sermon can edify the hearer if it fails to interest him.

The most extended discussion of interest is found in Thielicke's book introducing Spurgeon. Two characteristics of his preaching method are discussed: cheerfulness and worldliness. Under cheerfulness fall the twin features of humor and interestingness. Thielicke, like Reu, discovers in the etymology of interest the meaning of "being in" to something. He writes:

Once the element of interest is recognized as having this vital connection with the thing itself and this faculty of compelling attention, the effort to cultivate it by means of studied rhetorical techniques is not a mere trick of method, but grows right out of the relation between indicative and imperative
 . . .⁹⁸

A whole chapter from Spurgeon is devoted to the subject of attention later in the book. He begins by noting the lack of attention paid to attention in the homiletics books of his day, a lack that is still all too evident today. Nothing can be done in preaching without attention and it cannot be left to the people to pay it. While they may have a duty to be attentive, it is even more the duty of the preacher *"to make them do so."* *"You must attract the fish to your hook, and if they do not come you should blame the fisherman and not*

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 124.

⁹⁸ Helmut Thielicke, Encounter with Spurgeon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p. 26.

the fish."⁹⁹ Preachers who have no concern for gaining and maintaining attention come under Spurgeon's humorous scorn: *"The sooner such ministers sleep in the churchyard and preach by the verse on their grave-stones the better."*¹⁰⁰ About a dozen guidelines are given in this chapter, ranging from *"always say something worth hearing"* to *"prevent attendants traversing the aisles."* Finally, he concludes with *"a diamond rule: . . . Be yourself clothed with the Spirit of God, and then no question about attention or non-attention will arise."*¹⁰¹

Interest is important for Sittler in another respect. Contemporary preaching is not commonly ignored or repudiated because its claims are judged false. Rather; *"The word of grace is ignored because it is unreal and uninteresting, because it does not intersect actual man with promise, power and possibility"*¹⁰² that is big enough to match the actualities of his daily life. This is particularly so for the successful man of the world. It is increasingly true that *"a gospel whose scope does not address man in his joyous, creative, constructive and effectual operations is unchallenging because uninteresting."*¹⁰³

Lenski is concerned about maintaining attention. He counsels care in organization and outline for this purpose. When preachers wonder why their hearers become inattentive, Lenski explains one reason:

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 235. ¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 245.

¹⁰²Joseph Sittler, The Anguish of Preaching (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 28.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 38.

*It is almost impossible to give close attention to a sermon of about thirty minutes, if the preacher does not give the hearer certain necessary and natural hand-holds by which to grasp and retain the sermon contents. The better the hand-hold the easier it is to keep up the strain of attention.*¹⁰⁴

He compares these "hand-holds" to newspaper headlines. If the heading on a story seems interesting, the reader will attend it. That's why headlining is a journalistic art in its own right. *"Striking sermon parts likewise stimulate attention, arouse interest, keep the hearer keyed up to the last."*¹⁰⁵ He suspects that one reason many preachers do not announce the various parts of their sermons is because they are not interesting. *"If so, they condemn themselves. Let them build up their sermons with captivating parts!"*

One curious omission from nearly all homiletical literature is any discussion of attention as part of the duty of a herald. Dodd mentions this function in passing,¹⁰⁶ but otherwise it seems not to be noticed. Great emphasis is placed on the herald's role as a mouth-piece for transmission of a message not his own. But isn't it rather the case that he was a loudspeaker, sent not only to deliver, but to draw attention to the word of the King? When comparisons with such figures as the town crier are used, it is clear that the clanging bell was an attention device. The herald had a trumpet for the same purpose. Perhaps the detached, dispassionate announcer image of the herald is the exact opposite of the case. Attention for the message was as much a feature of his role as faithful transmission.

¹⁰⁴Lenski, p. 138. ¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁶C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 6.

The purpose of attention is not to spotlight the preacher, but to gain a hearing for the message of the King. Caemmerer says this pointedly: *"The preacher speaks so that people want to pay attention, not just to him but to God."*¹⁰⁷

Motivation. Homiletics has the same concern for motivation that we found in rhetoric. Steimle wrestles with this theme creatively. Aware, on the one hand, that motivation can only be the work of the Spirit, he nevertheless feels that finding the point of contact *"which will bring men to respond to God's redemptive action present here and now in the preached Word, is the most pressing problem for the preacher today."*¹⁰⁸ Admitting that his own struggle with the issue has not solved it, he places a challenge before others, insisting that *"every preacher of the Word must undergo some such agonizing struggle in an attempt to analyze the problem of motivation if his preaching is ever to find the point (of contact) again."*¹⁰⁹

The literature we are examining finds the source of motivation through preaching in both the law and gospel, depending on the nature of the call to be given. When the call is to repentance and faith, the law provides the motivation. We have seen this earlier in our discussion of law and its function of bringing man to the point of despair, making him hungry for grace.

¹⁰⁷Caemmerer, p. 41.

¹⁰⁸Edmund A. Steimle, "The Problem of Motivation in the Contemporary Pulpit," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, XVII (November 1961), 19.

In order to accomplish this, both Caemmerer and Stuempfle suggest using the surface symptoms of sin as evidence of man's deeper need and tracing them back to their source.¹⁰⁹ To say this another way, we begin with man's own felt needs of anxiety, loneliness, et al., and trace them back to his separation from God.

Approaching man on the basis of his felt needs is a common theme in this literature. Cognitive needs are as important as emotional needs. Reu explains the importance of knowing the doubts and questions people bring to the message. *"The sermon must pursue the objections of the natural mind to their final hiding places, if it is to succeed in convincing men of their responsibility, of sin, and judgment."*¹¹¹ Thielicke has the same concern. He wants to know the people to whom he speaks so that he knows

*. . . at which point they raise questions, so that I can 'latch on' to these questions, and I must know where they do not have questions, so that I must first stir them up to ask the pertinent questions. I must know whether they feel safe and secure, in order that I may shake them, or whether they are troubled with anxiety, that I may be able to comfort and encourage them.*¹¹²

The emotional needs are important too. From the perspective of pastoral care, Belgum strikes a common note when he urges preachers to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ cf. Caemmerer, p. 25. and Stuempfle, p. 46.

¹¹¹ Reu, p. 179.

¹¹² Helmut Thielicke, The Trouble With the Church (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 21.

follow the medical principle: *"diagnosis must always precede treatment."*¹¹³ In order to diagnose, the preacher must uncover *"the problems, the questions, the stresses that are breaking down modern man and bringing his life into meaninglessness."*¹¹⁴ People often are not aware of the real source of their problems and part of the preacher's task is:

*to help people formulate the real questions, to help them peel back the superficial activism, materialism, and idolatry, so that the primordial and universal questions are once more exposed to awareness.*¹¹⁵

The only way he can do this is to listen to people before he speaks to them.

In affirming the continuing value of preaching in the face of all its criticism, Stackel says *"pastoral preaching must be directed at the deep sores in the heart of modern man."*¹¹⁶ He identifies these as despair, loneliness, guilt and fear of death. When the preacher first chooses his sermon theme, he must determine, *"to what deep need of contemporary man this is going to speak."*¹¹⁷

The same emphasis comes from Graesser, who describes some basic steps in preaching from the Old Testament. After the first exegetical

¹¹³David Belgum, "Preaching and the Stresses of Life," Lutheran Quarterly, XX (November 1968), 352.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.* ¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 354.

¹¹⁶Robert Stackel, "Pastoral Preaching," Lutheran Quarterly, XX (November 1968), 364.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 367.

step, the preacher must then take the second step of determining the needs of the people to whom the sermon is to be preached. If he fails to address the sermon *"to the specific needs of his people"* everybody's time is wasted.

*Therefore, he gives thought to their immediate needs and endeavors to search out specifically those needs which are analogous to the needs of the ancient people to whom this text first spoke.*¹¹⁸

A reversal of this process is found in the thought of Thieliicke. Whereas theology formerly began with the life-situation of the text and then found its corollary in the present situation, today the order is reversed. We must start with the real situation in which people find themselves, then find its doctrinal or biblical corollary, and then *"let the gospel become a question or an answer"* in that situation.¹¹⁹ In either case, the need of man is the point of contact.

Hoh has composed a list of ten needs which, though out of date now, demonstrate the concern for preaching to human needs in this literature.¹²⁰ Scherer quotes a list of seven questions posed by Coffin as a kind of *"audience analysis"* which can help the preacher determine the needs of his hearers in terms of providing a point of contact for motivation.

¹¹⁸Carl Graesser, Jr., "Preaching from the Old Testament," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXVIII (September 1967), 531.

¹¹⁹cf. Thieliicke, The Trouble With the Church, pp. 115-118.

¹²⁰cf. Paul J. Hoh, "What Shall We Preach?" Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVIII (April 1945), 119-130.

Insofar as man's needs are a demonstration of his sin, the function of law is to prepare man to receive the answer to those needs through repentance. We must not think, however, that law can motivate man to change. All it can do is alert him to his need, it cannot solve it. Consequently, the gospel provides motivation for the life of faith. If the preacher's call is to obedience, he will find the source of motivation in the gospel already received by his hearers.

A fine discussion of the law's inability to motivate morality is provided by Tillich.¹²¹ All the Reformers, he writes, found the source of motivation for good works in the gospel. *"Not the fulfillment of commandments (which is impossible in the state of separation from God), but the acceptance of the message that we are accepted, is the motive of moral action."*¹²² Grace has the power to overcome the split between what we are and what we ought to be because it contains a polarity between the forgiveness of sins, which *"conquers the pain of morally unfulfilled existence"* and the gift of the Spirit which *"grants the blessedness of an at least fragmentary fulfillment."*¹²³ The man forgiven for the past and empowered for the future finds his motivation for obedience in that twin resource.

This emphasis is found in the letters of St. Paul. The Christian is motivated to obedience out of his new being in Christ. In

¹²¹Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 47-64.

¹²²*Ibid.*, p. 54.

¹²³*Ibid.*, p. 63.

Paul's epistles, Grumm finds no grounding for Christian obedience in either the concept of obligation or of gratitude. Rather, the accent falls on the indicative and the natural result that flows from it. He paraphrases Paul as saying in effect, *"This is what you have and are in Christ. To this you are called and destined by God in Christ. The imperative is implicit in the indicative. Be what you are."*¹²⁴

Davis partially reviews and lists the various appeals Paul makes to Christians and finds them located in motives which center in the love and mercy of God, the name and character of Christ and the Christian hope for eternity. These *"reveal the motivation of that special kind of person called a Christian."*¹²⁵ He contrasts them with appeals to *"self-interest"* and insists that preachers must have confidence that *"the glory of God is as powerful a motive."*¹²⁶ If preachers cannot count on Christian motives to move even non-Christians, they *"dare not appeal to sub-Christian motives."*¹²⁷

In his study of Baptism, Brand locates the motivation for Christian service in the new life given in Baptism.

*When one wishes to motivate Christians to diaconal service, the appeal should be neither legalistic nor should it appeal to self-interest. Christian freedom means that one does not serve because of laws which compel service . . . The motivation lies rather in one's Baptism. The appropriate way is to remind people of what God has made them in Christ and then to exhort them to act accordingly.*¹²⁸

¹²⁴M. H. Grumm, "Motivation in Paul's Epistles," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXV (April 1964), 215.

¹²⁵Davis, p. 134. ¹²⁶*ibid.*, p. 135. ¹²⁷*ibid.*, p. 136.

¹²⁸Eugene L. Brand, Baptism (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), pp. 64, 65.

Christians have a new nature which grows and expresses itself according to its own ends. Their behavior is motivated toward conformity to the image of Christ. *"It is their nature, in Christ, to relieve suffering, to work for justice and peace."*¹²⁹ The pastor does not ask them to give to the Red Cross because they may need blood themselves someday, but because Christ gave his blood for them and *"as He is, so are we in this world."* It is an appeal to be true to one's truest self, *"to what God has made us in Christ and what he has revealed to us of his goal for humanity."*¹³⁰

In summary, motivation for hearing the gospel is found in the law. As Luther said: *"hunger is the best cook."* Motivation for obedience is found in the gospel and the new life already given in Christ. This is an expression in Christian life of the self-actualization need which Maslow finds in natural life. As there is a need to actualize the self that is, so there is a need for the Christian to become what he is. To motivate him to actualize it in a given area of life, he needs to be reminded of who he is. Only the gospel tells him that.

Association. The task of associating the gospel to the need aroused by the law is a major theme in American Lutheran homiletics. We already have seen how Stuempfle and Caemmerer insist that the form in which the gospel is preached must answer the condition of man through

¹²⁹ *ibid.* ¹³⁰ *ibid.*

the use of "sets" or "complexes" that correlate directly with each other. The same emphasis is found in Stackel's article, where despair is matched by hope, loneliness by God's "companioning presence," guilt by forgiveness and fear of death by the hope of the resurrection. He writes: *"Every sermon must strive to reach into the core of distress in modern life and bring the healing of the gospel."*¹³¹ Hoh's list of ten contemporary needs is matched by ten parallel emphases of the gospel.¹³² Scherer says it this way: *"Sermons, like books, are 'good' only when 'they meet some human hunger or refute some human error."*¹³³ Sittler says that in every generation *"it is the peculiar task of preaching to lay the shape of the healing to the peculiar contours of the hurt."*¹³⁴ Weyermann expresses the point of associating the gospel to the need laid open by law clearly and succinctly:

*The only really meaningful preaching is that which sees the human problem in its depth and links the gospel as God's answer to that problem. The singular task of the preacher is to bring his hearer to the most profound understanding of himself and speak God's answer to his situation of bondage. The answer is the gospel, 'God has freed you from the powers of death.'*¹³⁵

This literature speaks also about association with the value symbols and native signs of the hearers. Reu stresses the importance

¹³¹Stackel, p. 367. ¹³²Hoh.

¹³³Paul Scherer, For We Have This Treasure (New York: Harper & Row, 1944), p. 156.

¹³⁴Joseph Sittler, The Ecology of Faith (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), p. 43.

¹³⁵Andrew M. Weyermann, "The Gospel and Life in Preaching," Concordia Theological Monthly, XL (June, July, August 1969), 446.

of the sermon being popular, but not by reflecting the opinions of the age. *"On the contrary, true popularity is present when the discourse or sermon corresponds to the inmost being, as it were the soul, of the people."*¹³⁶ In the congregation, it must conform *"to the peculiar nature of . . . the people of God."*¹³⁷ The places where the common characteristics of *"this people"* are symbolized are *"the Scriptures, the confessions, (especially the Small Catechism) and the hymns of the Church. In these their common nature and needs find satisfaction."*¹³⁸ The preacher should use the form and content of these materials, because in them he will *"most surely find the Christian folk-soil."*¹³⁹ These documents had a "ring of truth" to Lutherans in his day. When one is preaching to persons of other backgrounds, their value symbols would need to be used in the same way.

Preaching in a university setting, Sittler knew he must use value symbols appropriate there. In *"An Introduction to University Preaching,"*¹⁴⁰ he describes the characteristics of collegians which influenced his choices of content and form in preaching there. While admitting that after thirty years he is *"still trying to learn how to do it effectively,"*¹⁴¹ he preached in that setting quite differently from the way he would have in a parish. He found it necessary,

¹³⁶Reu, p. 224. ¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 225. ¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Joseph Sittler, The Care of the Earth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 1-10.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 5.

for example, *"to set the problem or prepare for the intended substance of the sermon by using non-biblical material,"*¹⁴² and to use *"ideas, facts, allusions from the entire range of human culture."*¹⁴³ To fail to adapt preaching to the mind-set of hearers is *"a kind of faithful disobedience."* Faithful, because it intends to preach the gospel, *"but disobedient, because one permits the offence of the gospel to be at the wrong place--in the form of the utterance instead of the disclosed substance of the utterance."*¹⁴⁴

Steimle is concerned with the question of native signs as it comes to focus in the gulf between the language of preaching and that of the listener. Communication demands that *"the signals must mean the same thing both to preacher and hearer."*¹⁴⁵ Yet even words like sin, grace, faith, and love may have different meanings for each of them. Much preaching is irrelevant simply because *"the primary signals"* of one are not used by the other.

How can the gulf be bridged? Steimle sees the solution partly in terms of the preacher's constant association with his people. He must *"live himself into the lives of his people. He must know the way they think, the language they use, the aspirations and frustrations that are theirs."*¹⁴⁶ One of the consequences of this counsel, and an

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 8. ¹⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 9. ¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵Edmund A. Steimle, "Preaching as the Word Made Relevant," *Lutheran Quarterly*, VI (February 1954), 21.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*

evidence of how seriously this literature takes it, is the repeated insistence that preachers visit in the homes of their people. Baughman, for example, says that counseling is not sufficient for this purpose because the pastor only learns to know man in his struggles and not his joys.

*The preacher knows people truly only when he knows them where they live. And the demand for effectiveness in preaching will continue to require him to trudge (or motor) from door to door, chat upon the homely themes which are suggested in these personal visits and be a patient listener and a true student of men. From this practice he will enter his pulpit, having received as well as given, the possessor of a quality which contributes something to his power so to preach that men and women will hear the gospel 'each in his own tongue.'*¹⁴⁷

Stendahl proposes the "*bilingual approach*" to bridge the gap between the biblical message and the language of the hearers. The preacher must "*be able to think as Paul and Mark and John thought, without any nervous anxiety for twentieth century relevance.*" At the same time, he needs equal competence in the language of his own time and place. Only this "*bilingual competence*" will allow his preaching to become biblical in the sense that the message can "*cut into men's lives.*"¹⁴⁸

For all his supposed lack of interest in homiletical technique, Luther can teach contemporary preachers much about this

¹⁴⁷Harry F. Baughman, "Preaching With Authority," Lutheran Church Quarterly, VIII:4 (October 1935), 321. See also: Iven H. Hagedorn, "The Job That is Never Finished," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (April 1944), 190.

¹⁴⁸Krister Stendahl, "The New Testament and the Preaching of the Church," Lutheran World, VI (June 1959), 28-32. See also: Duane A. Priebe, "Communicating the Text Today," Dialog, VI (Autumn 1968), 266.

"bilingual" capacity to preach in the native signs of the listeners.

Green outlines five suggestions which he draws from Luther's practice of preaching.

- (1) *Doctrinal preaching should be grounded in the Biblical text, and accord with the Creeds and Confessions of the church.*
- (2) *Dogmatics belongs in the study, but not in the pulpit, where not its technical formulations, but only its conclusions, are in place.*
- (3) *Shun the abstract and cultivate the concrete; relate dogmas to life as it is lived.*
- (4) *Speak on the level of the people's understanding; avoid stilted terms, words of foreign derivation such as Latinisms, and seek for pungent, Anglo-Saxon expressions, while avoiding the banal or vulgar.*
- (5) *Instead of using technical terms such as 'justification,' 'sanctification,' 'grace,' 'inspiration,' 'atonement,' and so on, try to use vivid images.¹⁴⁹*

The remarkable thing about this list is that its final four points are all related to this concern for native signs. This is a major emphasis in the literature as well as in Luther.¹⁵⁰

This literature is also concerned about prestige sources. The credibility of the preacher himself is a frequent area of emphasis. One problem in this area is created by the fact that we live in a time of "salesmanship, manipulation, and image building," in which we have

¹⁴⁹Lowell C. Green, "Justification in Luther's Preaching on Luke 18:9-14," Concordia Theological Monthly, XLIII (December 1972), 747.

¹⁵⁰See also: John L. Yost, "The Kind of Preaching Needed in Our Day," Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVIII (October 1945), 337, and Lenski, p. 42.

all learned to *"steel ourselves against propagandizing communication."*¹⁵¹ Preaching appears very similar to that in the eyes of many people. Belgium sees this as one of the *"impediments to communication between clergy and laity."*¹⁵²

The major development of this concern is voiced by Thieliicke. People have learned not to believe paid promoters. They know that the spokesman for a company does not necessarily believe or do what he is urging upon them, and therefore his words lose much of their power. This suspicion gets transferred to the man who speaks for God. *"Does the preacher himself drink what he hands out in the pulpit? This is the question that is being asked by the child of our time who has been burned by publicity and advertising."*¹⁵³ This real *"secret distrust of Christian preaching is smoldering"*¹⁵⁴ under all the more superficial criticisms. People sense that the preacher is *"living alongside of his message"*¹⁵⁵ and duplicity kills his effectiveness.

It is precisely at this point where the question of creditility becomes crucial for preaching. Thieliicke writes, *"People are . . . asking, 'where can I find credible witnesses?' I believe that hitherto Protestantism has given far too much thought to faith and far too little to the problem of credibility."*¹⁵⁶ The need for credibility is

¹⁵¹Belgum, p. 355. ¹⁵²*ibid.*

¹⁵³Thieliicke, The Trouble With the Church, p. 3.

¹⁵⁴*ibid.*, p. 9. ¹⁵⁵*ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁶*ibid.*, p. 15.

"one of the deepest longings of our time."¹⁵⁷ We are surrounded by functionaries who voice the "party line" but do not witness to their own convictions and therefore are not believed.

We cannot explore the whole dimension of Thieliicke's analysis and remedy. For our purpose it is enough to note that effectiveness in preaching is seen as directly related to the credibility of the preacher and that credibility is related to his personal faith and life. For *"the preacher, by the state of his soul, can belie the words which have been committed to him, no matter how well chosen and well disposed they are as he utters them."*¹⁵⁸ His faith and life must be in essential tune with his message *"in order not to contradict himself and remain unconvincing, indeed, in order to be able to reach his hearers at all."*¹⁵⁹

Both these emphases are found also in Steimle. In searching for the way by which preaching can be more than mere words, he begins with the person of the preacher. He must be a man in whom that which is preached has happened. Simply transmitting the content of faith is not enough unless it *"has passed through the mind and experience of the preacher and he can witness to it,"*¹⁶⁰ not as a concept but as *"a living deed"* which has taken place in his person. The preacher who lacks this may have the *"air"* but will not the *"note"* of authority. His life also must witness to that event having happened to him.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 16. ¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 24. ¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 19, 20. ¹⁶¹*Ibid.*

Writing on *"the preacher's identity with his message,"* Baughman points to the reinforcement a preacher's life can give to his words.

*Incarnations are the most persuasive things we know. And the degree with which the world acknowledges the authority of Christ's messenger is in direct ratio to the degree in which the truth he declares is clothed with the reality of his life.*¹⁶²

Paul preached effectively because men perceived the truth of his life. This is a part of God's purpose in using the media of preaching. Christ called for men to witness not only to the truth about God but also to the truth about themselves which resulted from God's truth in them.

*Witnessing was not meant to be the mere bloodless act of telling a captivating story or reasoning in convincing and brilliant fashion . . . It was to be bound up with the lavish, unselfish, sacrificial outlay of life. This, men perceived in the witness of a man who could say, 'I live, yet not I, it is Christ Jesus who liveth in me,' and so his witness lived its constraint upon their souls.*¹⁶³

Just as the credibility of the preacher is a theme in this literature,¹⁶⁴ so also is concern about his sources. Steimle addresses this in an ultimate way when he traces the problem of motivation to the primary source of the message. Since the preacher "speaks for God," his word might be expected to carry an instant believability. But just there, for Steimle, is the cure of the problem. He knows well the Luthern view of law and gospel in regard to motivation, as outlined above. *"This was the pattern in each sermon and was sure fire so far*

¹⁶²Baughman, 282. ¹⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹⁶⁴For an excellent discussion of credibility on a wider scale, see Canon Kenneth Cragg, "The Credibility of Christianity," *Dialog*, VIII (Winter 1969), 59-63.

as motivation was concerned."¹⁶⁵ But the effectiveness of any Word of God presupposes the image of an all powerful God in the hearer's mind. In earlier times people had such a vision of God. Not so now. He writes, "*The basic problem today is not simply anxiety . . . but anxiety leading to the failure to trust God because we question his sovereign power over all of life.*"¹⁶⁶ The sense of God's majesty and power and holiness has been largely lost and replaced by images of an impotent benevolence, too old or too chummy to revere. Such a god has no control over world affairs and cannot fulfill the deepest needs of an individual life. "*He will not even strike a man dead for thumbing his nose at him.*"¹⁶⁷

To speak of God's judgment is a joke to a person with that image of the deity. To speak of his love is a laugh. There is no value in the love of a god who lacks the power necessary to make it effective in life. Steimle writes:

*If the point of contact is man's basic anxiety leading to faithlessness and the answer to that anxiety is the very heart of the Gospel, the God who comes in forgiving love, then the motivation to accept that offer depends upon the fact that God is able to forgive and restore. His love presupposes his power.*¹⁶⁸

It is just that pre-supposition which has been lost in contemporary America. This is the core of the problem of motivation in preaching today. Until the Godliness of God is restored to common consciousness, the Word of God will fall on unresponsive ears. "*For only a God who*

¹⁶⁵Steimle, "The Problem of Motivation . . .," p. 6.

¹⁶⁶*ibid.*, p. 8. ¹⁶⁷*ibid.*, p. 11. ¹⁶⁸*ibid.*, p. 14.

*is in fact God and Lord of the totality of life can evoke a response from the totality of a man's being."*¹⁶⁹

New emphasis needs to be placed in preaching on God in Christ as *"the God of nature and history."*¹⁷⁰ The mystery and majesty of God must be emphasized. This point is pressed also by Scherer. In discussing the content of preaching, his first point deals with the greatness of God. While the world seems to have gotten bigger than God, in reality it has only gotten bigger than our idea of Him. If our preaching is *"to win for itself honor and a hearing"* its first word about God must be, *"not love, not personality, but mystery and transcendence."*¹⁷¹

Steimle develops this same theme in another place when he scores Lutheran preaching for an extreme Christocentricity. Amidst all the talk about Christ, there is very little mention of God. The result is that many in the pew do not connect what is said about Christ *"with that group of associations which in his own mind are gathered about the word 'God.'"*¹⁷² The result is that a Christian man may live under two deities: *"the Lord Jesus Christ who redeems and saves, whom the man loves and trusts, and the God of nature and of death whom the man respects and fears."*¹⁷³ Along with renewed emphasis on God's mystery and majesty, there is a need for preaching to voice the fact

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.* ¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁷¹Scherer, For We Have This Treasure, pp. 72-74.

¹⁷²Steimle, p. 14. ¹⁷³*Ibid.*

that "GOD was in Christ." *"For this is the Gospel: the good news about God."*¹⁷⁴

Direction. The rhetorical function of direction is fulfilled in preaching through the homiletical element of the call. Just as direction is based on prior appeals to both man's reason and emotion, so the call is issued on the basis of a presentation which has been addressed to the whole person.

An emphasis on appeal to the whole person is accented clearly in this homiletical literature. Schneider reviews the biblical and psychological material which shows the unity of body and soul. He urges preachers to address the total person, *"not just his 'soul'"*¹⁷⁵ and concludes: *"Preaching is addressed to the whole man in all of his life . . . to redeem his total life from destruction."*¹⁷⁶

The same emphasis is found in Thieliicke. Preaching must express itself in such a way that the intellect is stimulated to think, the will mobilized, the emotions engaged.

*For after all, my message is one that concerns not only all men but also the whole man: the man of feeling, the man of intellect, the man of will, and the far larger contingent of those who are a mixture of all three. Must not the very focus and goal of my sermon be such that it addresses all of these dimensions?*¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁷⁵Stanley D. Schneider, As One Who Speaks for God (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1965), p. 26.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁷⁷Thieliicke, The Trouble With the Church, p. 22.

The sermon must not waste its energies on *"anything less than the whole man,"* according to Scherer.¹⁷⁸ It must speak to the understanding of people in intellectually respectable language. It must also speak to the heart. This does not mean total reliance on the emotions, but *"to shun them is stupid and impossible."* It must finally speak to the will, where the change Christianity came into the world to accomplish is made. People are *"whole numbers"* and cannot be dealt with as *"fractions."* Man cannot be divided up like real estate. *"If a man does not operate all together, he would better not operate. We are religious with the sum total of our lives, or we are simply not religious."*¹⁷⁹

Reu makes the same point. The laws of logic, pedagogy and rhetoric must all *"be observed by the sermon, since its purpose is to produce a lasting effect upon the intellect, the feelings and the will."*¹⁸⁰ His section on *"The Sermon as Oration"* gives detailed instruction on technique in this regard, based on the rhetorical principles operative in his time.¹⁸¹

The strategy of issuing the call is in harmony with rhetorical theory as well. The preacher is to assume that the purpose of his message has been accomplished, that hearers have already been persuaded that they are ready to respond. The call is what comes when the persuading is over. It spells out clearly and specifically the exact

¹⁷⁸Scherer, For We Have This Treasure, p. 66.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 68. ¹⁸⁰Reu, p. 392. ¹⁸¹Ibid., pp. 169-246.

steps of response which are appropriate to the message heard. When the call is to faith, it answers the question: "*Brethren, what shall we do?*"¹⁸²

The call to obedience operates on the same strategy. The one recurring word found in Stuempfle's discussion is guidance. This presupposes a person who wants to do a thing, but needs assistance in implementing his desire. Reu says, "*All God-pleasing activity must proceed by an inner necessity out of the regenerate heart.*"¹⁸³ Guiding that "*inner necessity*" is what the call to obedience does.

This guidance must include information on what the appropriate response is. That's why much of this material is didache. Weyermann says that in preaching:

*We not only offer the gift of God's agape to the hearer but we indicate the shape of agape life that the hearer engages in as a result of the gospel taking hold in his life. The form of Christ bearing the cross in accord with His Father's will and suffering in love for the whole world is the shape of the new life. 'As I have loved you, so love one another.'*¹⁸⁴

A sermon that focuses mainly on a call to obedience will be presenting this "*shape*" in specific ways, as guidance to Christians who already want to do it.

There are times, of course, when the response-implications of the message are so clear that little guidance is needed. In those instances, as Lehmann suggests, "*The worshiper appropriates the message*

¹⁸² Acts 2:37.

¹⁸³ Reu, p. 203. ¹⁸⁴ Weyermann, p. 448.

of the text, i.e., he applies it to himself."¹⁸⁵ But when Lehmann goes on to say that this always happens, he sides with Davis in a one-sided description of a two-sided truth.

Lehmann holds a view of preaching which has "confidence that Jesus Christ himself constrains Christians to 'practice what they preach.'"¹⁸⁶ So do we all. But when he goes on to describe this as a faith "which bristles with and bursts forth in action in spontaneous combustion,"¹⁸⁷ without the faithful preaching of Christ's call, he fails to understand either the New Testament or the Lutheran homiletical tradition. For both reflect that sacramental rhetoric which sees, "God making his appeal through us."¹⁸⁸ What he approves as a "reckless confidence" in Christ's automatic production of Christian action, is reckless indeed. For it tells only half of a whole truth. The call is issued on the assumption that God is at work through it, to produce its fruit. But the call is to be issued by preaching.

As we saw in the section on motivation, the gospel is the motivator for obedience. If the sermon is to maintain its character as preaching, the guidance involved in the call must be properly motivated by preceding gospel. For only then will it be persuasive, enabling response. Without it, the sermon will become teaching. The congregation, therefore, will be reminded of who they are in the indicative

¹⁸⁵H. T. Lehmann, Heralds of the Gospel (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), p. 62.

¹⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 64. ¹⁸⁷*Ibid.* ¹⁸⁸11 Cor. 5:20

mode. It is only out of that soil that Christian obedience can emerge. Grumm states this clearly on the basis of St. Paul. First comes the indicative: This is who you are in Christ!

*Then when the imperatives do start, they come not as prods to move people, but as signposts to people who are already on the march. They are directives for the properly applied implementation of urges already present, instructions for self-expression of the new man in Christ.*¹⁸⁹

How is the call to obedience issued when the preacher cannot assume that his hearers "are already on the march" in relation to the particular response his text calls for? This is a key question. For here is where great mistakes are often made. There are unredeemed areas in every Christian life that require a return to "the first things." When this is the case, the preacher must not issue a call to obedience, but must return to the law-gospel duality in dealing with the matter. Judgment and grace become the issue again, and the call is for repentance. This is why kerygma is always appropriate in preaching to Christians.

No matter which call is offered, it is a guidance toward a goal already desired. It is a time to give clear and specific directions for response. Scherer expresses the manner of it beautifully.

*What is done should be done simply and quietly. But it should leave no doubt as to the solemn duty or the high faith or the royal privilege toward which all that you have said has been pressing your hearers so steadily as you would press back a crowd, until you have shut them up to God in Christ, and to the cleansing, healing, holding power of His eternal Spirit.*¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹Grumm, p. 215.

¹⁹⁰Scherer, For We Have This Treasure, p. 175.

CORRELATIONAL MODEL

The correspondence between theological, rhetorical and homiletical categories demonstrated above, can now be summarized. A Correlational Model of Preaching is presented in Figure 11. It will serve as the basis for this task.

The outer ring of the model represents the inner dynamics of the persons addressed. The inner circle represents the Word of God, normally drawn from a Scriptural text, which is to be communicated to the hearers. This Word is directed by the preacher to their needs, aiming to provide satisfaction and thereby securing pre-determined responses appropriate to it.

This communication is channeled through the human medium of rhetoric, represented by the second ring in from the outside. The message is shaped to the contours of motivation, association and direction. Motivation correlates with the hearer's need, by arousing it to the level of hunger or hurt. Association correlates with satisfaction, relating the proposal of the preacher as food for the hunger of healing for the hurt. In doing this, the preacher will associate himself, his sources and the content of his message with those symbols valued by the hearers, expressed in language and forms of thought native to them. Direction correlates with the response of the hearers, providing whatever guidance is needed for those who decide to actualize the satisfaction offered in the ways described.

In preaching, these rhetorical functions are performed by theological/homiletical elements into which the Word of the text is

shaped by the preacher, as represented by the third ring from the outside. These elements are designated as law, gospel and call. Each of them may function in one of two patterns, designated by the letters A and B.

When functioning in pattern A, these elements correlate with rhetoric in the couplets of law/motivation, gospel/association, call/direction. When functioning in pattern B, these elements may adjust and correlate homiletically as law/direction, gospel/motivation, call/association.

The purpose of pattern A is to bring the hearers to repentance and faith. In the case of non-Christians, the goal is conversion. In the case of Christians, the goal is an extension of conversion into areas of thought and action which yet remain dominated by their old nature.

In pattern A, law functions as a hammer against the rock of self-sufficiency, or as a mirror reflecting the judgment already resident in existence and the inevitable consequences to which it will ultimately lead. The gospel functions as a promise of what can be and an offer of the new life which is given on the basis of God's power and grace in Jesus Christ. The call functions as an invitation to repentance and faith, sacramentally actualized by incorporation into the Body of Christ in baptism, for non-Christians; and by communion with that Body in the Lord's Supper, for Christians.

In pattern B, the law functions as a statement of goal or direction, providing the content on which the call will later be based. In this pattern, law is understood in its "third use" or as the ground

of guidance for Christian thought and life. The gospel is directed motivationally to Christians. It comes not in the form of a promise, but as the declaration of present reality. It does not picture what Christians can be, but what they already are. It proclaims the identity and freedom which belongs to God's people by grace and the new nature given them by the Spirit. It motivates by arousing the need of the new self to actualize its nature in life. The call functions as a description of the way this new self looks in attitude and action. It associates the likeness of Christ with the Christian's thought and behavior. It visualizes the way the new nature can actualize itself in all the relationships of life. It encourages and exhorts Christians to bring their new nature into fuller expression in devotion, fellowship and service.

The preacher's responsibilities are represented by the arrow. First, he is to shape the text into a message by means of the theological/rhetorical dimensions we have described. The arrow pictures this by placing the Word at the center and extending it through these elements to its destination in the hearer.

Second, it is the preacher's responsibility to attract the attention of his listeners to the message and maintain it as he moves through its sequence. The arrow is therefore like a spinner that rotates around the circle, drawing attention by its movement.

Finally, the preacher is to move through these functions in the most effective direction. The order of presentation is important, both theologically and rhetorically. The "need-satisfaction" sequence is most critical to the hearer. Therefore, this arrow spins only to

the right and normally begins at point one.

There is room for variety, however. The arrow may begin at point three, particularly when preaching is done in pattern B. Under limited circumstances, it may even begin at point two, though not usually. Variety is also provided by spinning the arrow around more than once in the same message. If it is to rotate several times, one of the functional elements may be omitted in some of the rotations. This is also a variable speed spinner. It may provide variety by going slower in some functions and faster in others.

This model demonstrates the correspondence between preaching and rhetoric, between the Word and the hearer. When the Word of God is sacramentally communicated in this way, we may expect the results Sittler describes when he speaks of sermons that are

*. . . substantial, diagnostically sharp, cogent in the proposal of salvific powers, and resounding in the mind of the hearer so as to inform it, correct it, animate it by the exposition of creative alternatives toward fresh understanding and new resolutions of the will.*¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹Sittler, The Anguish of Preaching, p. 5.

QUESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study have been progressively expressed in the evaluation sections of the last three chapters and by the correlational model submitted above. These will now be drawn together by a catalogue of conclusions which are responsive to the questions posed at the end of Part one.

QUESTION: *Does preaching interact within the medium of public address, or does it participate in a means of communication operative outside of our classification?*

CONCLUSION 1. *In preaching, God communicates with man.*

The Divine presence and role in preaching is affirmed by this study. God is the source of the message, His Word is the content of the message, His Spirit is the agent by which its purpose is achieved. Preaching therefore differs from other forms of speech because God uses it as a channel of communication with man. In a real sense, God is the preacher in preaching, addressing man personally with His Word. While this is not His only channel of communication, it is the primary one because God wishes to speak to man on a person-to-person basis.

The preacher must understand his role in this light. He is not to assume the freedom to speak his own thoughts or supply his own content. He must understand that his message has been given by God for distribution and has been preserved and transmitted to him by the church. It is verbally coded in script within the Bible. He is responsible for faithful and accurate delivery of the message by virtue of

the assignment given him by the church through ordination.

Individual sermons will normally be based on a text from the Bible and always be biblical in theme. It is the preacher's task to say to those gathered before him the message God is saying to them in that text or theme. When he does so, God personally speaks to them in their situation. His Word is sufficient in itself for the fulfillment of its purpose. The preacher adds nothing to its effectiveness because of his own insight or rhetoric.

When preaching takes place in the setting of Worship, the people are involved in a dialogue with God. Through the preaching of the Word God speaks to them. They speak to Him by their responses of silence and murmuring or of prayer and praise. Whatever their response, they are participating in an encounter with the Eternal which influences their lives for better or for worse. Their responses are therefore responses to God and not to the preacher. When they respond in faith and obedience, God's primary purpose of blessing is achieved. When they respond in unbelief or rebellion, God's secondary purpose of judgment is actualized.

CONCLUSION 2. *In preaching, God communicates with man sacramentally.*

God always communicates with man through media native to human communication. The glory of God is revealed by His self-humiliation in which He hides Himself within historical processes and creaturely elements for the achievement of His purposes.

Within the sphere of those media of grace commonly used in the church, this understanding has been most fully worked out theologically

by Lutherans in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The sacramental principle affirms that the body and blood of Christ are really present *"in, with and under"* the bread and wine. Without changing the nature of bread and wine, Christ Himself is present in them for blessing or judgment.

The presence and activity of God through natural media is not unique to the Lord's Supper, but equally applies to other means of communication instituted by Christ. Preaching is one of those media. God's Word is not spoken apart from human words. While God's Word is heard in the human words only by faith, faith never hears God's Word apart from the human words.

This means God speaks to man through the same channels of communication which we have classified, allowing for inaccuracies in the classification. If God spoke apart from human media, we would need to add another type to the classification, perhaps labeled Divine or Spiritual. It would then be imagined to function through the non-verbal mode in the extra-sensory code. Some Christians would hold to such a supernatural medium, believing God speaks directly in man's heart or mind or spirit without dependence on sound waves and ear drums. In the Lutheran tradition that view is firmly rejected. When God speaks to man He speaks through persons to persons, using the sensory channels common to all other forms of human communication. If God is not heard this way, He is not heard any way. Preaching is one medium in which God communicates according to this sacramental principle.

CONCLUSION 3. *In preaching, God communicates with man through the medium of public address.*

Just as ordinary water, bread and wine are the media God uses in the sacraments, so public speech is the medium God uses in preaching. As the water used in baptism is "*holy water*" only because it is being used in God's service and not because of any special virtue in its nature, so the act of public address in preaching is "*sacred oratory*" only because it is used in the service of God. Preaching does not differ from other public address in nature or form. Its difference lies only in the area of content. It is precisely because of its ordinariness that God uses it as His medium of expression to us.

As a human medium, preaching operates on the same principles and models as all public speech. Smith's static and dynamic models of speech apply specifically to preaching. In the static model the structural elements shown are accurate for preaching. In the dynamic model the process of preaching is depicted. The words of the preacher go forth as a stimulus that enters the ears, then into the inner person. God's Word does its work in the intrapersonal communication system and the person reacts to it in ways that externalize in responses which become stimuli for other responses. Even internally, God works through the perception and cognition processes native to man. The manger and the cross are there, too. Preaching follows no model that is not also accurate for all public address. Its uniqueness belongs to its content.

Public address stands in the same relation to preaching as other aspects of culture do to other forms of Christian ministry. For

exegetical work we appropriate theories and principles from such fields as literary criticism. For anthems and hymns we apply the principles of music. For Christian education we study and apply the best laws of learning the world knows. When mission support is sought we borrow the principles of fund raising. When counselling troubled people, we learn from psychology and psycho-therapy. When building sanctuaries we adopt the principles of architecture. In all these and countless other ways, we know that our responsibilities under God require the very best we can bring to the human medium, even as we confess that it is never sufficient of itself.

When preaching theory insists on the use of language study, form criticism, et al., to assure that the preacher accurately decodes the Word of God, it is already admitting that God will not spiritually communicate His Word to the preacher apart from normal human processes of understanding. How is it possible then to say that God will communicate His Word to those listening to the preacher by some process other than clear human transmission? If the preacher is responsible to work actively with worldly tools to discern the message, he is equally responsible to apply those same tools in its delivery. For God's Word communicates itself no more automatically when it moves from preacher to hearer than it does when it moves from Scripture to preacher. In preaching, God communicates with man sacramentally through the medium of public address.

QUESTION:

Does preaching purposely seek pre-determined responses of change, or does it aim to convey information with as little conscious influence as possible?

CONCLUSION 4. *Preaching is purposive in nature.*

As all communication occurs for some purpose, so preaching is purposive in nature. It aims to accomplish the purpose of God in the lives of people. These purposes revolve around the twin poles of thought and action, belief and behavior, faith and love. It is God's purpose to reveal Himself to people in order that they may live in trusting dependence upon Him and loving obedience to Him.

Preaching is one means by which God intends to achieve that purpose. It aims to restore man to that relation with God which alone can enable man to experience the destiny for which he was created.

Every sermon must therefore have some dimension of those purposes for its purpose. The preacher must know that purpose and work toward it in order to be the vehicle of its fulfillment in the lives of people. If he doesn't know the response God seeks, the people who hear him are not likely to know it either. God works through the preaching toward a goal to be actualized in response. The preacher is to work in harmony with that purpose.

CONCLUSION 5. *Preaching is rhetorical by definition.*

One way God fulfills His goals through the medium of public address is by teaching. Preaching differs from teaching in that its purpose is not primarily informative. Preaching seeks specific responses of change in persons. It is therefore persuasive by definition. When people need to know, they are taught. But their problem is that they do not always believe what they learn or practice what they have been taught. They live in a bondage that keeps them from trusting God

and obeying Him.

It is this situation that preaching addresses. It does not aim at indiscriminate responses, but at specific responses which are appropriate to the purpose of the Word God speaks. Minds must change. Attitudes and opinions must change. The purpose of preaching is to facilitate those changes. When it does so, its primary purpose is accomplished. When it does not do so, it has failed in that purpose.

Preaching is therefore aimed always at decisions to be actualized in behavior. As God's Word and Spirit are persuasively at work influencing the hearers to trust and obey God, so the preacher is to work in harmony with that divine activity. Since God confines His communication to the media of man, He will not persuade through non-persuasive means any more than He will instruct through non-instructional means. This does not make God's effectiveness dependent on man's effectiveness. It simply means that God's action takes place through those vehicles which do not frustrate the accomplishment of His purposes. If one channel blocks His purpose, He'll use another.

CONCLUSION 6. *Preaching is mindful of man's bondage and respectful of his freedom*

Preaching aims to influence people to change in ways that fulfill God's gracious purpose. It exerts this influence because people are bound by demonic forces, one of which is apathy. They need the stimulating energy of persuasive influence in order to be free to choose. Therefore, God stimulates man with both judgment and promise. He uses punishment and reward within the historical process of time

to influence man. Preaching voices these in order to bring man to the place where he is able to decide for or against change. When preaching fails to do so, it fails to take seriously the bondage of man to apathy.

On the other hand, preaching is also respectful of man's freedom. When he is able to choose he is left with the choice. God does not replace one state of helplessness with another. He does not exercise His influence so strongly that man cannot resist Him. He does not trade apathy for coercion.

The preacher must not do so either. He is not to manipulate the hearer into an outward response that is not the result of a free inward decision. Nor must he pressure to the point where the listener's options are practically taken away. God works through preaching for a response freely made and freely given. He provides the opportunity, the possibility and the incentive. But the choice is man's and the consequences which flow from it are his responsibility. The preacher must therefore neither ignore man's bondage to apathy nor forget man's personal freedom. He must be persuasive.

QUESTION: *Does preaching have a sequence of functional elements essential to its purpose, or may it express any content in any way?*

CONCLUSION 7. *Preaching has three functional elements, law, gospel and call.*

Sermons have a wide variety of specific change-goals and therefore any number of themes around which the message may center.

Preaching is addressed to non-Christians and to Christians, seeking specific responses according to the situation of the hearers and their relationship to God. But amidst this endless variety, there is a set of functional elements which every sermon will include. For no matter what its specific purpose or theme, the content will be God's Word and the purpose will be to effect change.

All preaching will contain an element of law. If the purpose is to achieve repentance and faith, this element will seek to expose, within the thought and feeling of the hearer, his own need for repentance. If the purpose is to achieve obedience to God's will in Christian life, this element will clarify the purpose of God and the possibility of man's fulfillment of that purpose. In the first instance, law functions as a word of judgment. In the second instance it functions as the vision of a realistic goal.

All preaching will contain the element of gospel. If its function is to satisfy the need aroused by the law, it will offer forgiveness, reconciliation, hope, comfort or whatever correlates with that need. It will make this offer on the basis of the person and work of Christ. If its function is to motivate Christian obedience, it will proclaim grace as the present possession of the Christian, as a reality already received and operative in the new nature given in union with Christ.

All preaching will contain the element of call. This is what makes a sermon preaching rather than teaching. The call is specifically shaped by the particular purpose of the particular sermon. It identifies the exact pre-determined responses that are called for and

describes the ways and means of fulfilling them. If the call is to repentance and faith, it articulates the shape these may take in response. If the call is to obedience, it gives instructions on the actions to be performed and the means by which they may be done.

CONCLUSION 8. *The three elements in preaching are sequential in order.*

The sequence of these elements is important both theologically and rhetorically. Law precedes gospel as a need precedes its fulfillment. It is folly to offer a solution to a man who doesn't know he has a problem. If he discovers the problem after the solution is offered, he may not himself be willing or able to work out the relation between the two. If that relation is not seen, he will leave the sermon in a state of need rather than in a state of fulfillment. Therefore, particularly the sequence of law and gospel should be maintained in every sermon, just as the sequence of need and satisfaction should be maintained in every persuasive speech. This is the heart of preaching both theologically and rhetorically. Variation here may well destroy the very purpose the sermon has set out to achieve.

The call element functions most effectively at the end, for only then is the hearer interested in its content. If it is put first, it may not make sense to any but those who were prepared before hearing the sermon to follow in its steps.

The only justification for changing the order or balance of these elements is found in those cases where the preacher is certain that preceding functions have been performed prior to the sermon in

the life-situation of the hearers. At a funeral, for example, there may be little need for law, since death has already demonstrated its reality and spoken its dark word to the hearers. They may be ready to hear the gospel right at the start. Again, the final sermon given on a spiritual-renewal-retreat may find hearers so rejoicing in the reality of their acceptance by God, that the parting message may be largely devoted to a call. But normally, the sequence will be maintained.

CONCLUSION 9. All three elements and their sequence are essential to purpose in preaching.

The need for these elements and their sequence grows out of the purpose of preaching. The message demands law and gospel because its function is to proclaim God's Word, which always includes those elements. If law is not preached, grace turns into permissiveness and becomes cheapened by an apparent lack of ethical responsibility. If the law is preached without gospel, it becomes a tyrant of rigid righteousness which demands what cannot be given and requires what cannot be done. If the call is preached without law and gospel, it answers questions no one is asking or gives directions for driving on a road no one is travelling.

All three elements in their proper sequence are necessary to achieve the persuasive purpose of preaching. The person with no problem does not listen to its solution. The person with no solution to his problem does not act to appropriate it. But a man who is thirsty will eagerly follow directions to a water fountain.

QUESTION: *Does preaching attempt to draw attention through interest, or does it depend on the hearers to pay attention?*

CONCLUSION 10. *Attention is the responsibility of the preacher.*

The necessary pre-condition to all communication is attention. In transmitting messages, responsibility for attention rests with the sender of the message, except in cases where his only duty, like that of a mail man, is to deposit rather than communicate the message. While this is true of all communication, it is particularly important in persuasive communication. For people respond only to those things which they attend.

The preacher has a special responsibility in this regard. He is sent with a message God wants people to hear more than they want to hear it. The preacher cannot depend on the initiative of the hearers to attend. They are bound not only by apathy, but also by resistance. Like Adam, they hide because they don't want to hear the Word of God in their nakedness. God sends the preacher into their garden with the first task of securing their attention. "*Adam, where are you?*" For until attention is captured, the next question cannot be heard; "*How did you know you were naked? Have you eaten. . .?*" Neither can the ram be slain to provide covering for that exposure.

Neither law nor gospel can fulfill their purpose without the attention of people and it is in the very nature of the medium of preaching to secure it. A bell is rung, a trumpet is blown. "*Hear ye, Hear ye,*" is shouted. "*Hear, O Israel,*" is sounded. The Word requires a living voice partly because the ears of man must be attracted to a

Word he will otherwise seek to avoid.

CONCLUSION 11. *Interest is the means of attention in preaching.*

While preaching may at times be so dramatic as to attract involuntary attention, it will rely primarily on relating itself to the interests of the hearers. This never means that the content of the message is determined by those interests. It only means that it will appropriate the interests of man for use by the interests of God. It will use the attention potential resident within the hearers to fasten their ears on the Word of God.

Preaching will use forms of expression and figures of speech that are interesting rather than dull. It will appropriate material that is known and familiar, pictorial and concrete, novelly applied and sometimes humorous. But above all, it will speak about the real needs of real people, the very ones listening to the sermon.

The first interest of each person is himself. So God began addressing Adam by calling his name. The second interest of each person is his own needs. So God spoke to Adam about his nakedness. The third interest of each person is the consequences and solution of his needs. So God speaks judgment and provides covering. If the preacher speaks personally to the people before him about their needs, about their consequences and solutions, they will invariably be interested and consequently attentive.

QUESTION: *Does preaching relate to motivation through concentrating on consistency and human needs, or does it function in isolation from them?*

CONCLUSION 12. *Preaching initiates motivation by relating to symptomatic needs.*

The needs which people perceive in themselves are real and provide the motivational point of contact for the preacher. The preacher finds some of these in the questions to which he can "*latch on.*" For they are evidences of cognitive inconsistency. We question only those things which fail to fit into our present conceptual framework. A man questions the goodness of God when he beholds suffering, because he cannot find cognitive consistency between the concept "*good God,*" and the concept of "*human suffering.*" When the preacher finds such questions, he already knows where the motivation for changed attitudes resides. He only needs raise the question and his hearers are ready for an answer.

The physiological, security, belonging, esteem and self-actualization needs are all contact points for preaching, as well. Since the first is most widely fulfilled and since the last does not predominate in the organism until the others are fulfilled, the middle three categories provide the widest field of motivation for most hearers.

When the law is held up as a mirror reflecting anxiety, despair, hopelessness, fear and death, it is doing nothing other than showing how these needs are not being fulfilled in the experience of the hearers. When the law is applied to Christians as a vision of what they are called to become, it is relating to the self-actualization need in the new nature. Preaching produces motivation by beginning with these symptomatic needs as perceived by the hearers.

CONCLUSION 13. *Preaching deepens motivation by tracing symptomatic needs to their source in man's ultimate need for reunion with God.*

It is not the need man perceives but the need man fails to perceive that is the prime function of law to uncover. While the preacher begins where people are in their perception of need, he takes them deeper into that need than they dare to go on their own. He leads them to the place where sin is seen to be "*exceedingly sinful*." Their cognitive tension over the inconsistency between a "*good God*" and "*human suffering*" is traced back to the lack of trust in God which lies at the center of all man's need. It gets traced back to that pride in which man presumes to be the judge of God's character rather than the object of His judgment.

The law traces security needs to their source. What is fear and lack of confidence if it is not lack of trust in God and His care for my welfare? It traces love needs back to their source. What is loneliness but the result of my separation from others caused by my separation from God and His people? It traces the esteem needs back to their source. What is an inferiority complex but the denial of my creation in the image of God? What is my drive for the spotlight but the expression of a radical self-centeredness that wants the whole world revolving around me? And what is that, but the rebellion which seeks to take over God's throne? Preaching is forever relating to human needs, beginning with those which are perceived by man and continuing to the point where their demonic center is exposed.

QUESTION:

Does preaching aim to relate its message to the human response—springs within its hearers, or does it express its word in its own way in the conviction that human response processes do not apply to its goal?

CONCLUSION 14. Preaching relates the gospel to the needs uncovered by the law.

The central function of preaching is to proclaim good news. The law is preached only so that the news preaching brings may be heard as good. For news is good only to those for whom it fulfills a need. The call is preached only to facilitate the actualization of the consequences of this good news. Preaching, by definition, is to bring good news. Everything else is secondary to its nature.

The gospel is related as an answer to the cognitive tension created by the law. Through the proclamation of forgiveness, cognitive dissonance is overcome because the discrepant behavior is removed and consistency between ethics and behavior is restored. In relation to the question of suffering and God's goodness, for example, a new cognitive association is created by the gospel. God is no longer seen as the heartless one who sits idly by doing nothing about man's suffering. He is seen on the cross as a participant in man's suffering, as the General who is wounded at the head of his troops. In the resurrection He is seen as the victor over suffering and death, not just for Himself but for us. A cognitive shift takes place. Suffering is now seen as the weapon of that evil enemy against whom God fights along with man. God is perceived as for us, not against us. Suffering remains, but it is now seen as a means of redemption as well as destruction. While the gospel does not answer all our questions, it enables

us to trust God and in trusting Him the cognitive balance is restored even in the midst of our suffering.

Preaching applies the gospel to our security needs. Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. It applies to our belonging needs. Nothing in earth, heaven or hell can separate us from the love of God. It applies to our esteem needs. We are no longer servants but sons, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. We are princes in the Kingdom. It applies to our self-actualization needs. For with the other needs sufficiently satisfied, we are free to fulfill the destiny of our creation, to grow into the fullness of the stature of the likeness of Christ.

CONCLUSION 15. *To a limited degree, preaching adapts to the symbols and signs of the culture in which it speaks.*

The content of preaching does not adjust in order to gain acceptance in any culture. God's Word is eternal. Judgment and grace do not change. But the forms of man's thought and the language by which he understands do change. Preaching appropriates the vernacular in every way possible in order to be heard.

It is just this capacity for cultural adaptation that makes preaching the primary medium for all times. It can know and relate to the times. Only the living voice can provide the flexibility God wants in a medium to be understood and believed across ages and cultures. The preacher is used because he can be a medium for his time. He can know the value symbols and native signs without which no communication

is successful.

When we say the preacher is "*only*" a medium through which God speaks to man, let us not make him a mechanical medium. For the nature of this medium is exactly the opposite of that. The preacher's capacity to make the cultural adaptation necessary for persuasive communication with culturally conditioned persons is the very essence of his task. When attempts are made to describe preachers as mechanical transmitters with no responsibility for the processes of decoding and encoding the eternal Word, the very nature of this medium is distorted and replaced by a different medium altogether. It is just because a limited adaptation to culture is necessary for human communication that God chose preaching as a medium for His Word.

CONCLUSION 16. *Preaching requires true credibility in its servants and sources.*

Credibility is the believability a speaker has in the estimation of his hearers. Human responses are not prompted only by the content of a message received. They are deeply affected by the person of the messenger in personal interaction with the hearer. A speaker whose character is suspect or whose information is inaccurate, or whose expression is offensive simply does not achieve the same responses to his message that his opposite number enjoys.

In preaching, this issue focuses in the hearer's perception of the speaker's relationship to God and to the message he brings from God. There is a "*ring of authenticity*" which surrounds the preacher who has been captured by His message and the Lord of whom it speaks.

There are no "marks" which can describe this characteristic, but people sense it as surely as they sense another person's interest in them or manipulation of them. To be sure, a preacher may imitate the characteristics of authentic preaching. So long as people are fooled, the power of the gospel in their message does its persuasive work. But when the inauthentic note is heard, the listener discounts the message along with the messenger and God cannot get His Word through that channel any longer.

The views people hold of God Himself as the source of the message, or the Bible as the record of it, or the church as the steward of it, all exact their toll in response to preaching. On the one hand, this means that Christians in general and preachers in particular must be alert to their own need for constant growth in faith and love. On the other hand, it means that too much dare not be claimed for the nature of Christian experience, lest the gap between that which we are in Christ and that which we have yet to become in the world becomes in itself a stumbling block.

QUESTION: *Does preaching seek to articulate specific directions for hearers to follow in shaping their response of acceptance to its message, or does it leave the hearers to formulate the implications and consequences of response for themselves?*

CONCLUSION 17. *Preaching specifically directs responses of faith and life.*

The final goal of all preaching is a change in the faith or life of the hearers. Preaching specifically articulates those responses appropriate to the Word delivered. While hearers may always find

forms of response that relate to their individual lives in ways the preacher could not know, he does not assume those responses in his message. If the Word from the King calls people to turn, the preacher is responsible for articulating that response. God will not speak it to all who are present apart from the preacher. He must give guidance on how turning may be facilitated in the relationship with God and with others. He will describe the shapes it takes as people are transferred from darkness to light. He will visualize the consequences of a failure to turn and the consequences of making the turn. He will do as his Lord did, picturing the man who built his house upon the sand in contrast to the man who built his house upon the rock.

If the message from the King calls for a response of obedient service, the preacher will tell where and how and when it can be performed. He will not call people to love their neighbors generally, but to bring food to the elderly in his own community through a "*meals on wheels*" program being instituted on the following Thursday night. That is, he will be specific in directing the life of faith in its works of love.

CONCLUSION 19. *Preaching relies on the Spirit of God to empower responses.*

When the preacher has done all he can do, he neither congratulates himself for success in the light of positive responses nor berates himself for failure in the face of negative responses. He knows that his exegesis and rhetoric are not the power but the channel. He knows when people are persuaded that the Spirit has worked through him.

He knows when they are not that the Spirit grieves as deeply as he. So he goes about his work responsibly and sensitively, being the best channel of grace he can be.

He does not presume on God's promise that His Word will not return unto Him void. He gives his best knowledge and labor to the task of his calling. Neither does he presume that his effort will usher in the Kingdom by itself. He knows that God is at work through him as a medium. So he rests easy in the grace that he preaches.

The preacher is like a good doctor who has studied medicine diligently, who knows his patients thoroughly and who practices all the human skill he has gained in the art of surgery. When the operation is over, he wipes the sweat from his brow and in the dependence of faith leaves his patient in the hands of God, Who alone can heal.

FIGURES

Figure 1. The effect of the concentration of the solution on the rate of the reaction.

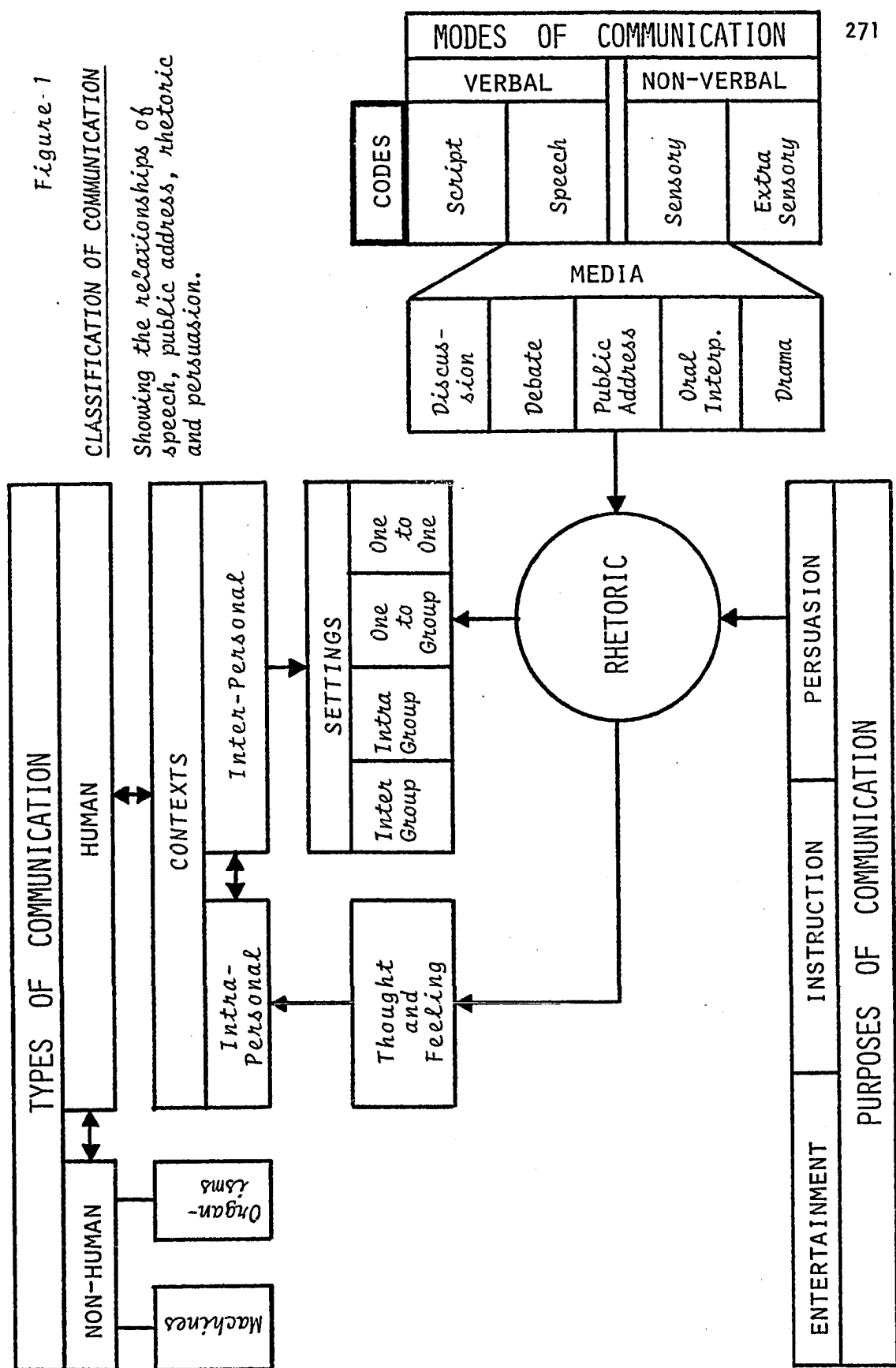


FIGURE 2

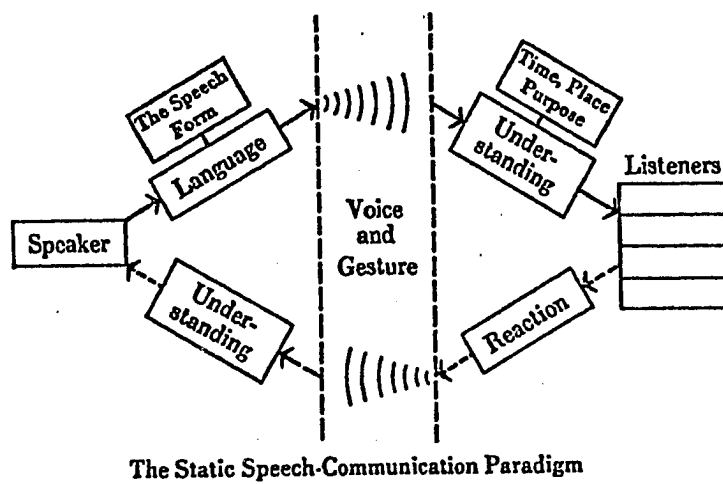


FIGURE 3

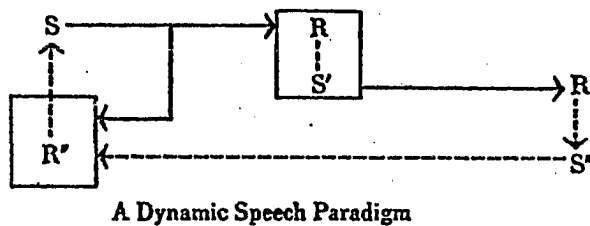


Figure 4

THE RELATION OF INFLUENCE AND FREEDOM

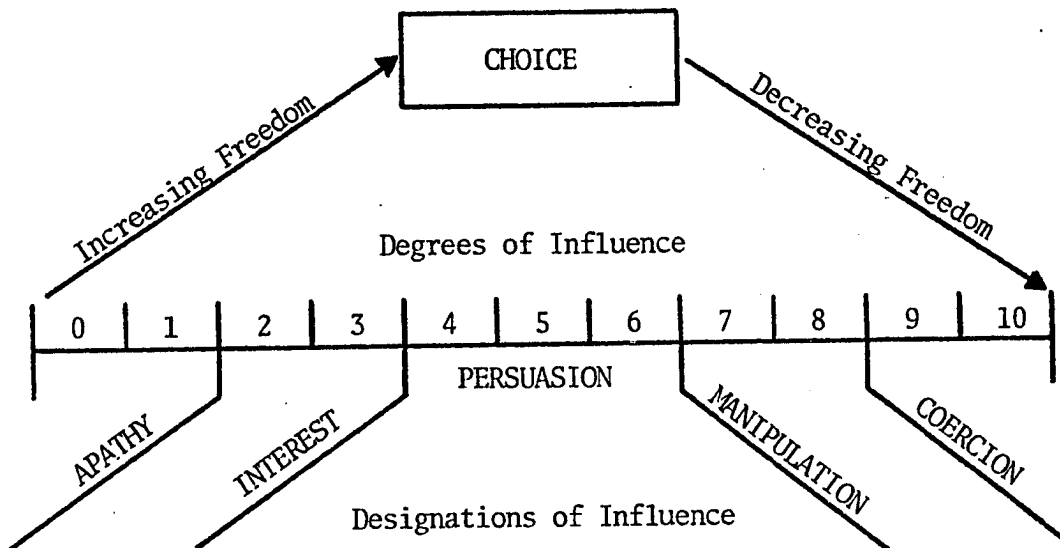


Figure 5

THE RELATION OF ATTENTION TO THE
PERSUASIVE PATTERN

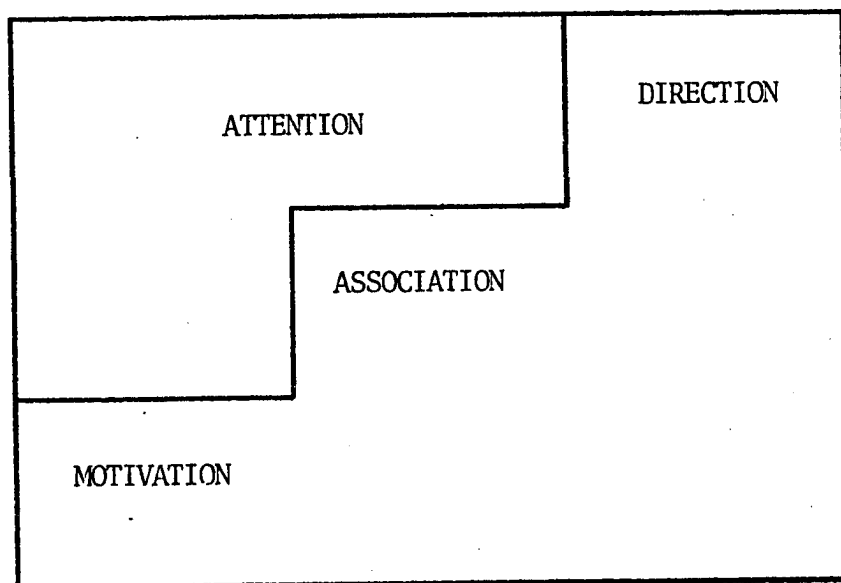


Figure 6

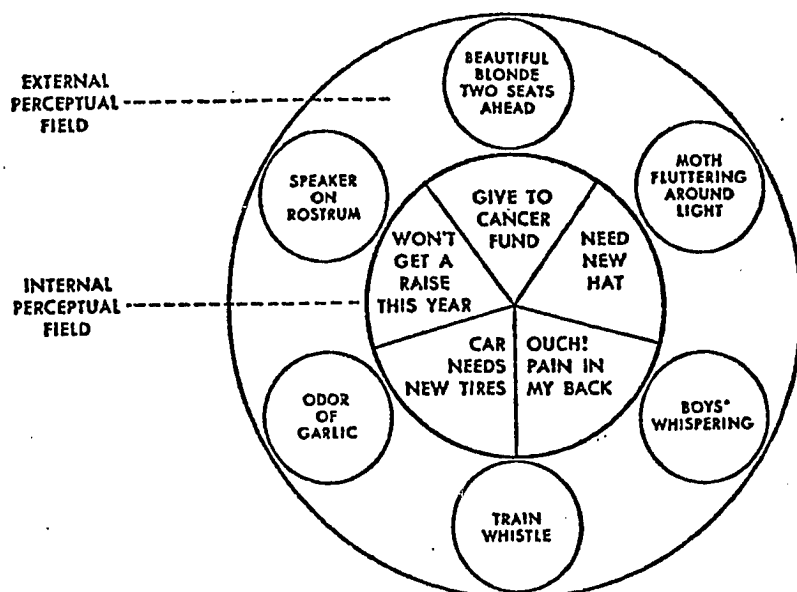
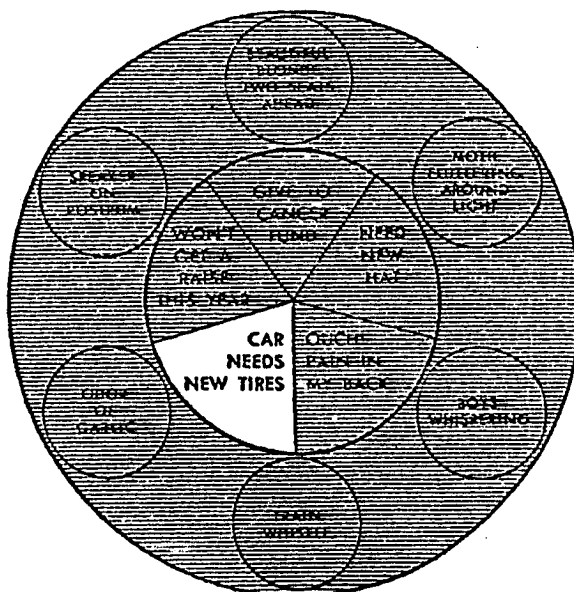


Figure 7

**NEED FOR TIRES
STANDS OUT
CLEARLY**

**OTHER
STIMULI
INCLUDING
SPEAKER AND
HIS MESSAGE
BECOME
INDISTINCT
AND UNATTENDED**



**SPEAKER AND
MESSAGE
STAND OUT
CLEARLY**

**OTHER
STIMULI IN
THE PERCEPTUAL
FIELD FADE
AND ARE
UNATTENDED**

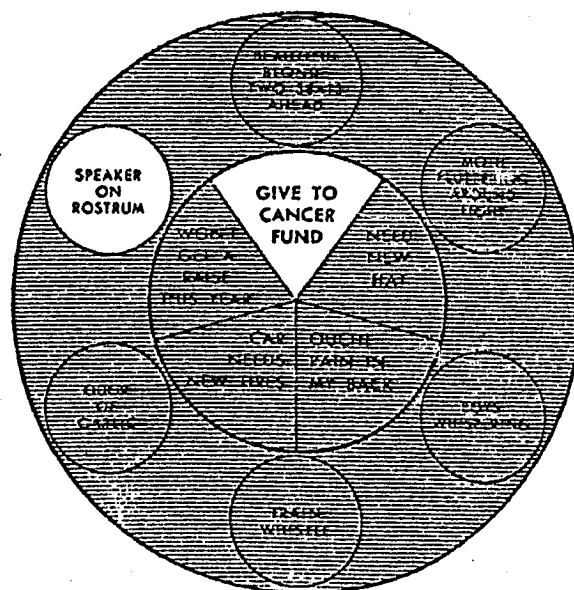


Figure 8

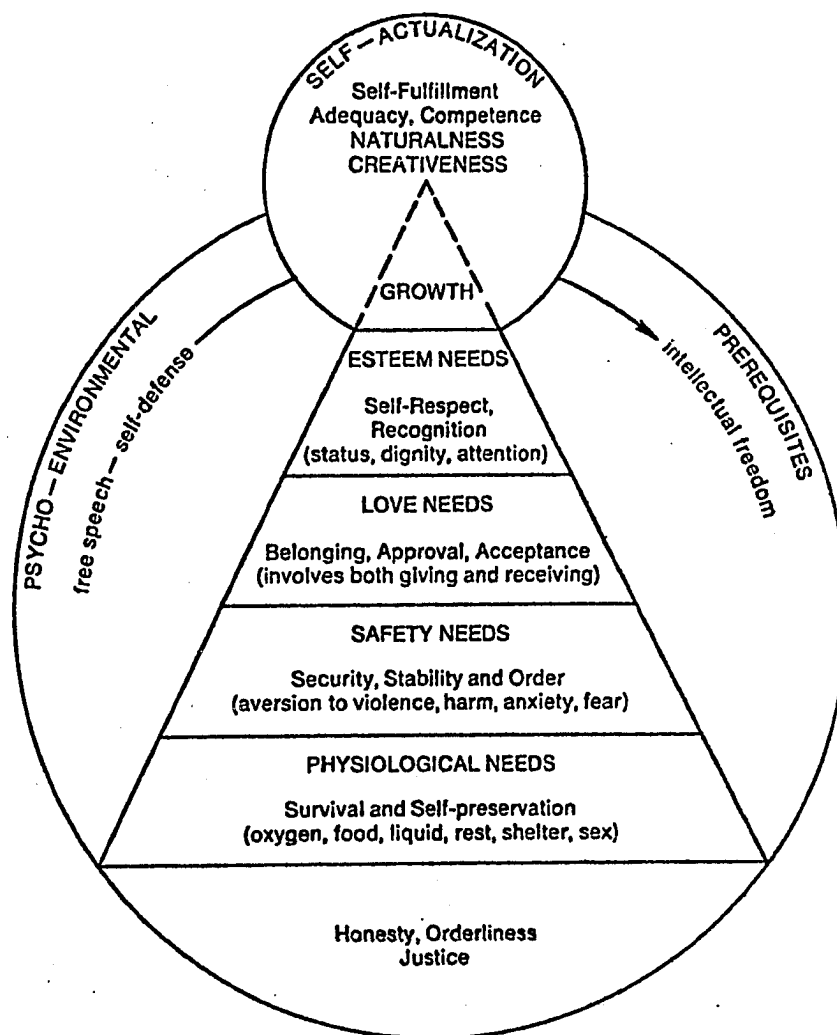


Figure 9

Figure 10

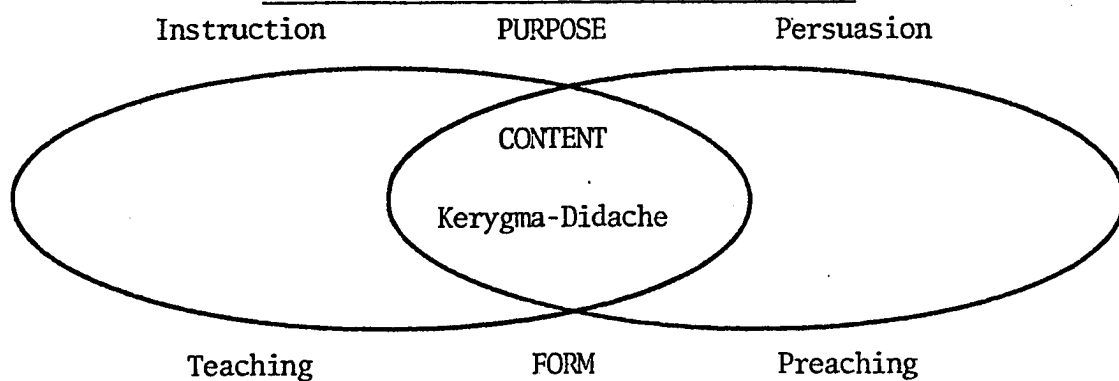
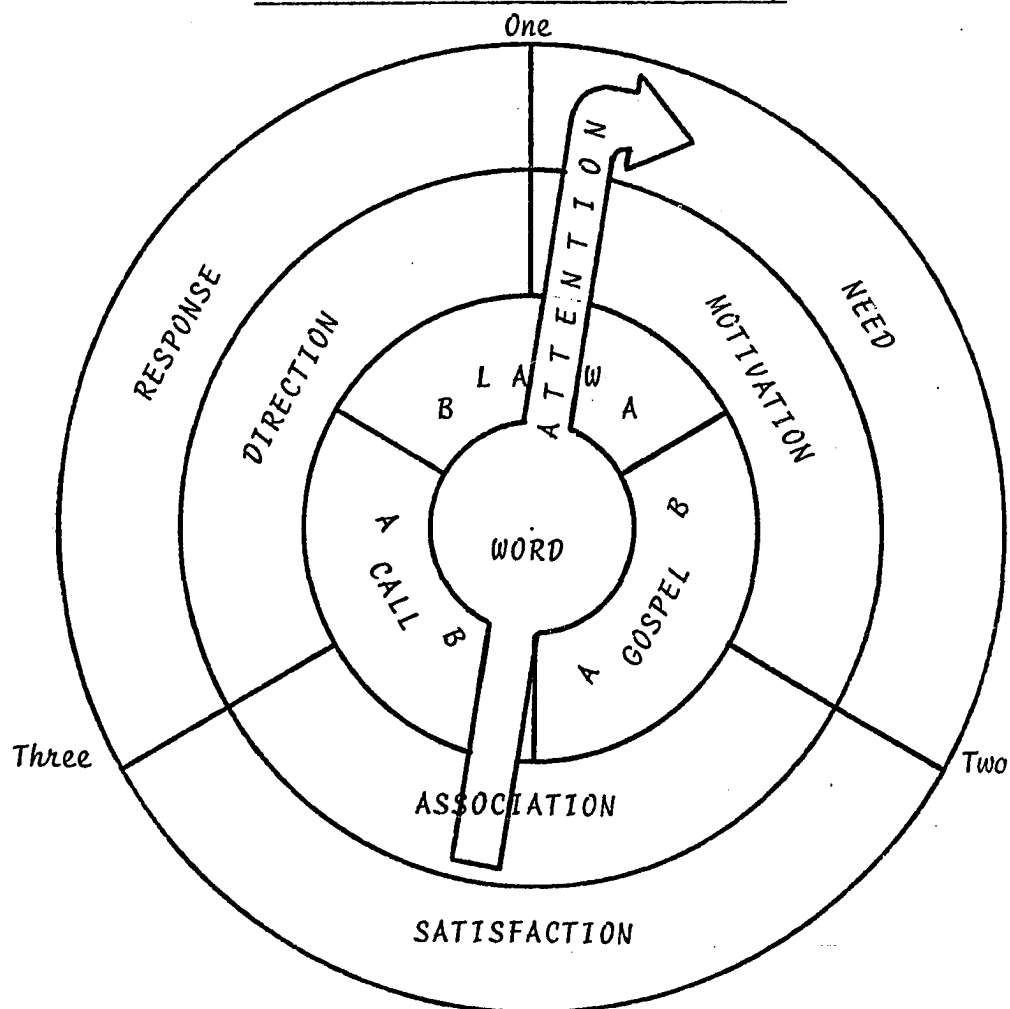
The Relation of Preaching and Teaching

Figure 11

A Correlational Model of Preaching

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